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STEVE JACKSON
AND IAN LIVINGSTONE

Magehunter

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MAGEHUNTER

It is a hard life, ridding the land of evil sorcerers, but someone has to make a stand against the Black Arts. Someone has to risk life and soul, pursuing the unholy, pitting faith and guile against the machinations of the wicked. That someone is YOU.

Under the patronage of the Margrave Mechtner you have become the foremost Magehunter of your age. Orayan the Summoner of Demons, Yurial of Rachsburg, Salome the Warlock's Bride – these notorious sorcerers, and many more besides, have fallen to you. Trapped within a circle of mirrors, weakened by shots from your trusty flintlock pistol, all of them finally submitted. You bound them with rope of human hair and led them back to Margrave's castle. You cleansed the world entirely of their evil influence.

Your latest foe is Mencius, perhaps the most vicious of them all. He has sacrificed many in his pursuit of power. You corner him at last and return to the castle. But your jubilation is short-lived: Mencius escapes, kidnapping Reinhardt – your patron's son – and uses the Evil Arts to flee to a distant land. In this land your priorities change. From a pursuit of evil, it becomes a matter of survival as you encounter the strange people of the world of Titan and the horrors lurking in ambush for the unwary.

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Dedicated to the Kiriyama family,
especially Kiyoshi-san,
who made this book possible

The Most Revered Treatise of
MAGE HUNTING

In the course of my long career as a pursuer of foulness and castigator of demons, I have found the following methods to be effective. Two or more in combination should be sufficient to constrain even the most potent magery.

Defeating a Mage

1 Dressing a sorcerer in undyed cloth will tie him to earth.
2 A bullet of purest silver will pierce a mage's skin.
3 A sword which has been touched by the mage's blood may wound him.
4 Tying a wizard with rope of human hair will restrain him and prevent him from using sorcery.
5 A mage cannot protect himself against his own sorcery.

Detecting a Mage

1 Wizards do not eat fish.
2 Mages must always wear some red cloth close to their body, or they will be deprived of half their power.
3 Small birds will sicken and die if a sorcerer is near.
4 If asked from whence they come, mages never tell the truth.
5 If submerged in water, a sorcerer's body will swell to twice its normal size.

Pursuing a Mage

1 If the holy symbol is drawn in the earth and a stone cast into the circle, it will fall in the quarter showing the direction of the nearest mage.
2 If a compass needle is dipped in wizard's blood, it will always show the direction of the wizard, and the speed at which it moves shows how near he is.
3 Every 101st footprint left by a mage is that of a cat.
4 A hound which is fed for a week on nothing but goat's meat may sniff out the scent of a wizard.
5 The flames of a fire lit in the open on the 13th day of the new moon will point in the direction of the nearest wizard.

Have a care, for wizards are impervious to normal earthly weapons, and may use their powers of trickery to deceive a pursuer, no matter how stout of heart. Any man who accepts the gift of a cloak from a wizard will be in that wizard's power. Use your wits and may good prevail!

INTRODUCTION

There are magehunters aplenty, men who have sworn to rid the lands of the foul practitioners of the evil arts. But you are The Magehunter, the best at your craft. Under the patronage of Margrave Mechtner, scourge of evil, you have brought countless sorcerers to justice – and to death by fire! Others may swear by their blessed relics and gimmicks, but you got where you are today through talent alone.

Before beginning your most challenging quest to date, you must determine your strengths and weaknesses. On pages 18/19 there is an *Adventure Sheet* on which you may record the details of your adventure. On it you will find boxes for recording your SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores.

It is best either to make photocopies of the *Adventure Sheet* or to record your scores in pencil, as it is unlikely that you will succeed at the first attempt.

Skill, Stamina and Luck

Roll one dice. Add 6 to the number rolled and enter the total in the SKILL box on the *Adventure Sheet*.

Roll two dice. Add 12 to the number rolled and enter the total in the STAMINA box.

Roll one dice, add 6 and enter the total in the LUCK box.

These are the *Initial* scores for your three main attributes. For reasons that will be explained below, all these scores will change during the adventure. You must keep an accurate record of them, and for this reason you are advised to write small in the boxes, or to keep an eraser handy. But never rub out your *Initial* scores. Although you may be awarded additional SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK points, their totals may not exceed their *Initial* scores, except on some very rare occasions when the text specifically tells you so.

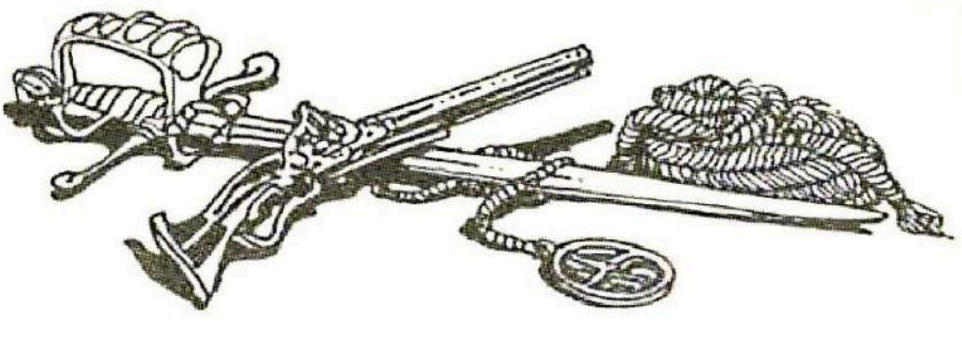
You SKILL score reflects your expertise in combat, your dexterity and your agility. Your STAMINA score reflects how healthy and physically fit you are. Your LUCK score indicates how lucky you are. In all these cases, the higher your score, the better!

Battles

During your adventure you will often encounter enemies which must be fought. An option to flee may be given, but if not – or if you choose to attack the creature anyway – you must resolve the battle as described below.

First record your opponent's SKILL and STAMINA scores in the first empty Encounter Box on your *Adventure Sheet*. The scores for every potential adversary are given each time you have an encounter which may end in combat. The sequence for combat is then:

1. Roll two dice for your opponent. Add its SKILL score. This total is the opponent's Attack Strength.
2. Roll two dice for yourself. Add the number rolled to your current SKILL score. This total is your Attack Strength.
3. If your Attack Strength is higher than that of your opponent, you have wounded it: proceed to step 4. If your opponent's Attack Strength is higher than yours, it has wounded you: proceed to step 5. If both Attack Strength totals are the same, you have avoided each other's blows – start the next Attack Round from step 1, above.
4. You have wounded the creature, so deduct 2 points from its STAMINA score. (You may use your LUCK here to do additional damage – see below.) Now proceed to step 6.
5. The creature has wounded you, so deduct 2 points from your own STAMINA score. (Again you may use LUCK at this stage – see below.)
6. Make the appropriate adjustments either to your opponent's or to your own STAMINA score (and to your LUCK score if you used LUCK – see below).
7. Begin the next Attack Round by repeating steps 1–6. This sequence continues until the STAMINA score of either you or your adversary has been reduced to zero (death).



Escaping

In some paragraphs you will be given the option of escaping from a fight if things are going badly for you. However, if you do run away, your opponent automatically gets in one free attack on you (deduct 2 STAMINA points) as you flee. (Note that you may use LUCK to minimize this wound in the normal way – see below.) You may Escape only if this option is specifically given to you in the relevant paragraph.

Luck

At various times during your adventure, either in battle or when you find yourself in a situation in which you could be either lucky or unlucky, you have to call on your LUCK to make the outcome more favourable. But beware! Using LUCK is a risky business, and if you are *un*lucky, the results could be disastrous.

The procedure for using your LUCK is as follows: roll two dice. If the number rolled is less than or equal to your current LUCK score, you have been Lucky and the result will go in your favour. If the number rolled is higher than your current LUCK score, you have been Unlucky and you will be penalized.

This procedure is known as *Testing your Luck*. Each time you *Test your Luck*, you must subtract 1 point from your current LUCK score. You will soon come to realize that, the more you rely on your LUCK, the more risky this will become.

Using Luck in Battles

In certain paragraphs you will be told to *Test your Luck* and will then discover the consequences of being Lucky or Unlucky. However, you always have the option of using your LUCK in battle, either to inflict more severe damage on an opponent you have just wounded or to reduce the seriousness of a wound your opponent has just inflicted on you.

If you have just won an Attack Round, you may *Test your Luck* as described above. If you are Lucky, you have inflicted a severe wound on your opponent and may deduct 2 extra points from the creature's STAMINA score. However, if you are Unlucky, the wound was a mere scratch and you must restore 1 point to its STAMINA (so that, insteady of inflicting the usual 2 points of damage, you have now caused only 1).

If you have just lost an Attack Round and have been wounded, you may *Test your Luck* to try to lessen the effect of the wound. If you are Lucky, you have managed to avoid the full impact of the blow; restore 1 point of STAMINA (so that, instead of causing 2 points of damage on you, it has done only 1). If you are Unlucky, you have had to take a more serious blow: deduct 1 *extra* point from your STAMINA.

Remember: you must subtract 1 point from your LUCK score every time you *Test your Luck* regardless of the outcome.

Restoring Skill, Stamina and Luck

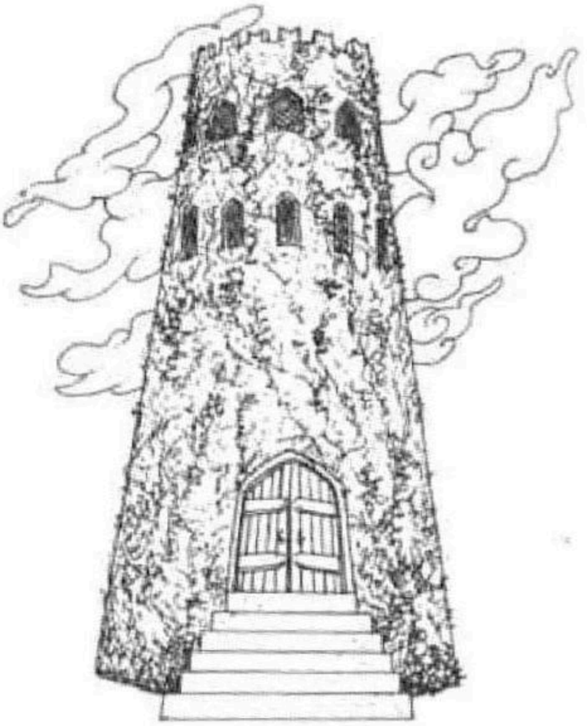
Skill

Your SKILL score will not change much during your adventure. Occasionally a paragraph may give you instructions to increase or decrease your SKILL score. Your SKILL score can never exceed its *Initial* value unless you are specifically instructed to the contrary. If you ever have to fight a battle with your bare hands (for example, if you have lost your sword), you must temporarily subtract 2 from your Attack Strength for the duration of the combat.

Stamina and Provisions

Your STAMINA score will change a lot during your adventure as you fight many foes and undertake arduous tasks. If your STAMINA score ever falls to zero, you have been killed and must start again.

You can restore lost STAMINA by eating emergency food rations, known as Provisions. You start the game with enough Provisions for five meals. You may rest and eat at any time, except when engaged in combat. Eating a meal restores 4 STAMINA points. When you eat a meal, add 4 points to your STAMINA score and deduct 1 point from your Provisions. A separate Provisions Remaining box is provided on the *Adventure Sheet* for recording details of Provisions



Luck

Additions to your LUCK score may be awarded in the adventure when you have been particularly lucky or created your own luck by some action. Details are given, where appropriate, in the paragraphs of the book. Remember that, as with SKILL and STAMINA, your LUCK score may never exceed its *Initial* value – unless you are specifically told that it can.

Equipment

You are not one of those magehunters who carries around a veritable wagonload of weapons and devices – but all the same there are some things that are *essential*. Your clothes are made of undyed cloth and leather, as this slightly reduces the effectiveness of sorcery used against you (contact with undyed cloth also weakens mages). For weaponry, you choose a pistol, with its ammunition: a box of powder and three bullets – one of them silver. For hand-to-hand combat, your long, basket-hilted broadsword has served you well in many a duel.

Mirrors are useful items in dealing with wizards; you have 12, which you keep in the many pockets of your leather jerkin. You also have a compass needle. Note down all these items in the Equipment box of your *Adventure Sheet*. You often use a rope of human hair to bind mages.

You are not especially wealthy: roll one dice and note that you possess this number of silver pieces in the Money box of your *Adventure Sheet*.

Companion

In the course of the adventure you may acquire a companion. If you do, you may need to note down this person's SKILL, STAMINA and LUCK scores; use the box marked Companion on your *Adventure Sheet*. Also, be careful to note down any equipment they may have in the lower part of your Equipment box. Usually you will have access to any equipment a companion may be carrying – but, if you are separated, you will lose it!

ADVENTURE SHEET

SKILL
Initial
Skill=

STAMINA
Initial
Stamina=

LUCK
Initial
Luck=

MONEY:

EQUIPMENT LIST:

NOTES:

COMPANION'S
PROVISIONS REMAINING:

COMPANION:

SKILL
Initial
Skill=

STAMINA
Initial
Stamina=

LUCK
Initial
Luck=

SWITCH ☐

ENCOUNTER BOXES

Skill= *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*
Skill= *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*
Skill= *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*
Skill= *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*	*Skill=* *Stamina=*

BACKGROUND

The chase nears its end. Your quarry is desperate. You hope that no more innocents will be sacrificed in his attempts to escape justice. Your lungs are bursting, but you run along the earth track as fast you can, praying that in the gloomy twilight you will not be tripped by a stray root. Then, silhouetted in the gate of the cemetery, you see your enemy, Mencius. He leans on one of the pillars for support, his cloak flapping in the night breeze like a giant black carrion bird. His head turns and he sees you – and an unearthly screech rends the air. He casts around like a cornered fox, but you have fenced him in with your circle of mirrors. He has nowhere to go but the cemetery in which the body of his mother lies. Here his sorcerous power is crippled, and he knows it. He flaps his arms in a last attempt to fly and manages to rise a metre off the ground before a silver bullet from your pistol brings him crashing to earth.

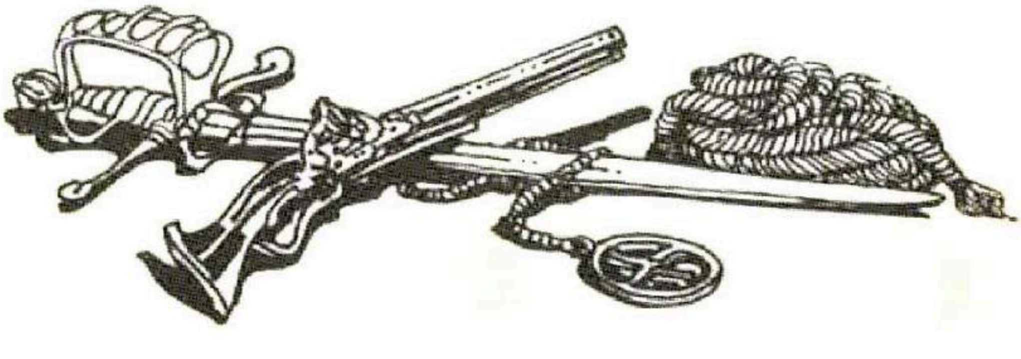
Panting hard, you cover the last fifty metres to where Mencius sprawls. He raises a contemptuous face to you. 'I curse you to the end of eternity,' he snarls. 'And I will have my revenge.' You have heard many such threats before, and you're still alive, so you waste no time in replying but bind him quickly with your rope made of human hair. If you can return him to the Margrave's castle before dawn, he can be destroyed on the morrow.

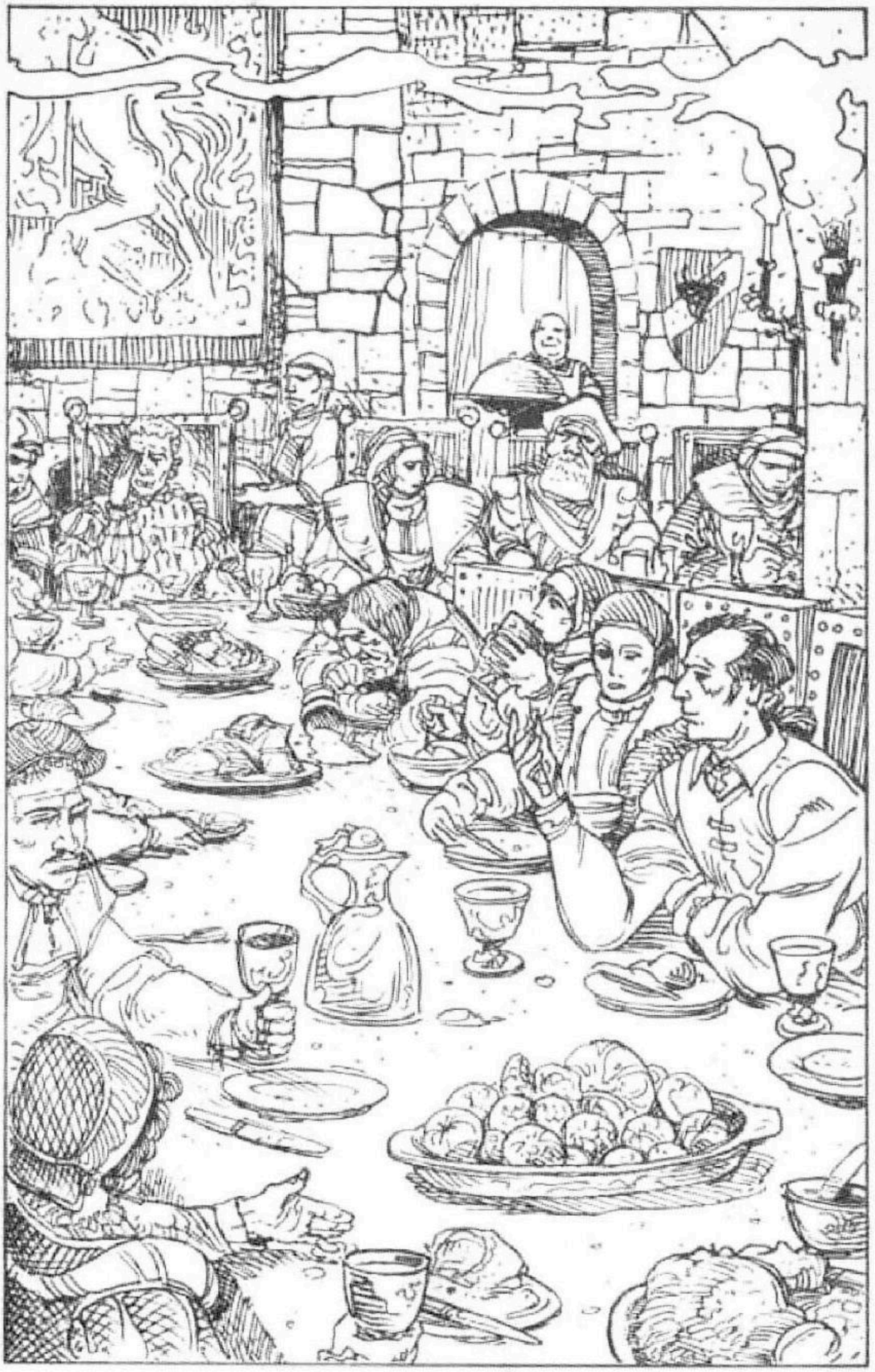
Fate is not with you, however. On the return journey, your horse stumbles and Mencius, bound and slung across the saddle, cackles malevolently. Surely his magic could not have caused the upset, but you are unnerved nevertheless. Your horse is lame, and you have to lead it the rest of the way.

When you arrive at the castle it is nearly mid-day. Worse tidings await you: Mechtner, the old Margrave who sponsored your cause and lent his considerable power to the hunt for wizards, died in the night. Your arrival is hardly noticed amid the funeral preparations, and you cannot be sure that your urgent instructions to the guards leading Mencius down to the dungeon will be followed properly.

As a bondsman of the Margrave you must attend his successor, the feckless young Reinhardt, at the funeral rites. After your success in bringing Mencius to justice, it promises to be a dispiriting day.

Now turn to paragraph **1**.





1

The funeral is held immediately. By tradition, the heir of the deceased wears red mourning clothes, while everyone else must wear undyed cloth. This is no hardship for you, as you always dress in undyed cloth and rough leather. You take your place in the funeral cortège and slowly follow the coffin on its journey to the castle chapel. The rites last for several hours, and the company then returns to the great hall, where a last meal will be eaten to honour the dead Margrave. After the second course, young Reinhardt, clad in ceremonial scarlet, makes his excuses and leaves. You wish that you, too, could leave this dismal feast, but courtesy forbids it.

Suddenly the castle starts to shake. There are screams, and you leap to your feet, swaying, as the floor heaves beneath your feet. A block of masonry crashes down, and mourners dive under the stout oak table for protection. If you are willing to risk a breach of etiquette and head for the dungeons, turn to **87**. If you stay where you are, turn to **234**.

2

You show your drinking companion the wound, and he sucks in his breath. He ushers you out of the tavern and along the street to a small building. Inside, he talks for a while to a sharp-eyed fellow. If you have a bullet wound, turn to **298**. If Reinhardt has the bullet wound, turn to **381**.

3

Reinhardt screeches in protest as you are carried off, but it's no use. That'll serve him right for never helping you fight! Note down 'abandoned' next to the word Companion on your *Adventure Sheet*. Turn to **251**.

4

The sparse, sun-bleached vegetation is a far cry from the dark, wet forests of your homeland. After a bare half-hour of walking, sweat is already trickling down your face. Luckily, you can quench your thirst at the nearby river. Some time in mid-morning, you see smoke rising into the sky from up ahead. Advancing cautiously, you spy a small village. The buildings seem to be made of baked mud, and the inhabitants are wearing strange clothes, but at least they are human, and they seem peaceful. The two of you make your way to the village, spreading your arms and begging for food and assistance. To your consternation, the villagers just stare, bewildered, then start jabbering in a language you have never heard before. If you persist, trying to get the people to understand you, turn to **206**. If you retrace your steps, turn to **369**.

5

A shaft of blinding light runs along your sword blade. There's a hiss from the Book of Craft, and a stinging sensation. Lose 1 point from your STAMINA. If you have reduced the Scintillating Globe to zero STAMINA points, turn to **215**; otherwise, return to **286** and continue the fight.

6

You start asking if anyone has seen someone who looks similar to you, since Reinhardt looks far more like you than do any of these swarthy people. You quickly strike lucky. An old man explains that the person you are following passed through the town and he is fairly sure that the stranger was on his way to the capital, Kallamehr. The old man remarks that the man spoke Kal better than you do, which strikes you as a little odd – but, all the same, it's good to pick up the trail. The man is happy to tell you some more about Kallamehr. Turn to **348**.

7

You swing your broadsword, hoping at least to knock him down, even if his sorcerous power will prevent you from wounding him. To your surprise, your blade catches him unawares, slicing into his chest at the third rib and cutting as deeply as his heart. His chant gurgles to a stop, and he topples. If you have a Shauca Scar, turn to **125**. Otherwise, turn to **384**.

8

It's almost impossible to gain any useful information without being able to speak the language of these people, but you do attract considerable attention with your attempts. Finally you wander the streets desolately, looking for *something* that may help you. It's no use. Note down the word 'fame' on your *Adventure Sheet* if it is not there already, then mark a cross and turn to **241**.

9

You collect some dry wood and build a pyre; there is plenty of tinder, and the job is easy. Mencius's body is soon consumed by a roaring blaze. As you watch the flames, you plan your next move. Turn to **336**.

10

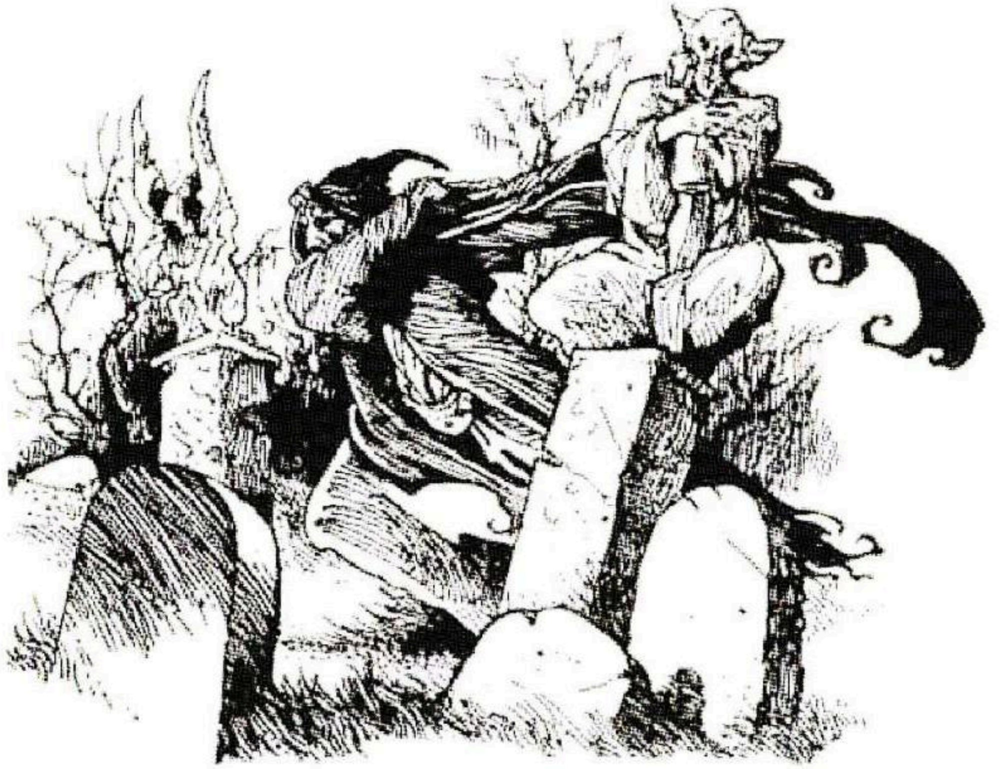
Crab meat is tasty and nutritious; if you want to eat some of the dead crab, turn to **359**. Otherwise, decide whether to continue along the beach to the left (turn to **64**) or travel in the opposite direction (turn to **220**).

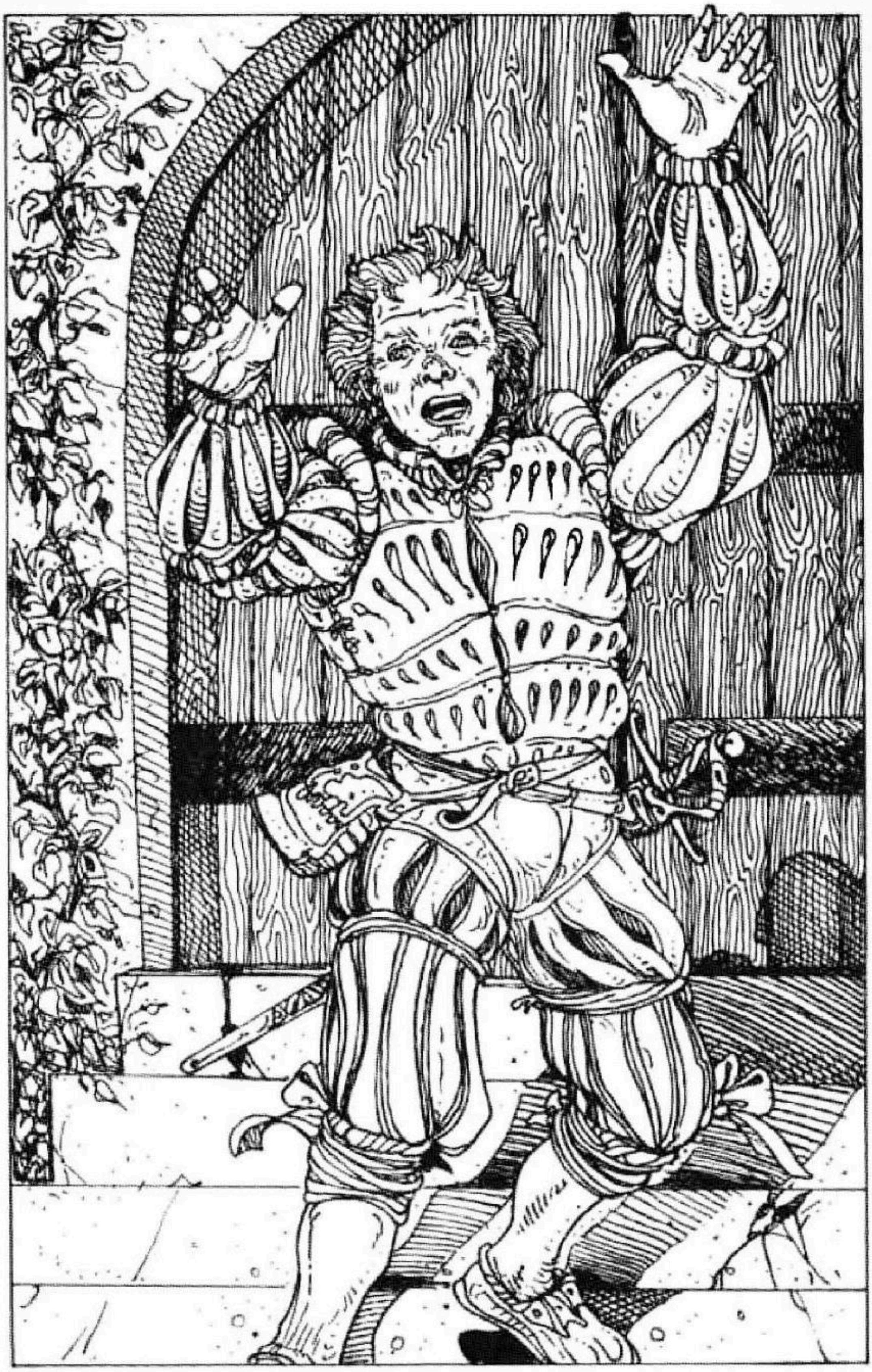
11

Searching through the nest, you amass a veritable treasure hoard: 67 Gold Pieces, seven pieces of jewellery and a diamond as large as one of your bullets (note down your gains on your *Adventure Sheet*). Now you must face the tricky task of descending from the lofty peak. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **94**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **278**.

12

Twice you have had to suck snake's venom from your body, and once you had to do the same with poison from some demonic insect summoned by the mage Orayan (whom you later had the pleasure of seeing burned at the stake). You know the method, it's just a matter of keeping your wits about you and doing it correctly. Roll two dice. If the result is less than your SKILL, turn to **191**. If the result is equal to or greater than your SKILL, turn to **212**.





13

To your surprise, the door at the top of the steps opens, and Reinhardt appears and hurries towards you. He is delighted to see you and starts telling you how kind and generous his hosts have been, how they rescued him from the dangers of the wilderness and showered him with gifts. Ushering you into the great hall of the tower, he presses several presents on you: a smart black belt, a jewelled shortsword and an embroidered cloak. If you accept the gifts, turn to **77**. If you refuse, turn to **213**.

14

As you feel your way forward, you step on a section of floor which slowly sinks down a few centimetres. There is a click and the sound of rock moving against rock . . . and a huge slab of stone crashes down on to you. Your hopes of success are squashed for ever.

15

Grabbing Reinhardt by the scruff of his neck, you leap backwards into the fast-flowing river. The creature snarls but dare not follow you, weighed down as it is with armour. You are carried along for several hundred metres – you notice the place where you arrived pass by – before you can drag yourselves out of the river. You collapse on the bank, letting the hot sun dry your clothes, before proceeding. Turn to **245**.

16

With a great deal of sign language and the few phrases at your disposal, you manage to convey that you are trying to find a sorcerer. You strike lucky quite quickly – a white-bearded old man nods emphatically. You learn that the man you seek is outside town, and the white-beard offers to guide you there. On the journey you try to make conversation with the old man, but you constantly come up against the barrier of language. After walking into the hills for a couple of hours, you arrive at a familiar sheltered valley, with a cave mouth. The white-beard calls out 'Khasim' and says something to you that you can't understand – except that it includes the word 'sorcerer'. When there is no reply, the old man bids you wait and disappears into the cave. He returns soon afterwards, his face as white as a sheet and his whole body trembling. Shooting nervous glances all around, he gestures urgently for you to follow him. If you go with him, turn to **196**. If you decide to strike out on your own, turn to **357**.

17

Searching the bodies of your fallen enemies, you find a bunch of keys, apparently made of glass or crystal. You hurry back to the cell and free Reinhardt. Now will you go back up the tunnel (turn to **240**) or continue along it (turn to **179**)?

18

Something catches your eye – a pile of clothes lying close to the bank of the river. When you pick them up, you realize that it is your own undershirt and breeches of undyed linen. You must be on the trail of your quarry! One strange thing is: rips have appeared in the fabric, as if it has been torn asunder. Still, it can be repaired, and it's surely preferable to what you're currently dressed in. Note down 'undyed clothes' on your Equipment List and turn to **110**.

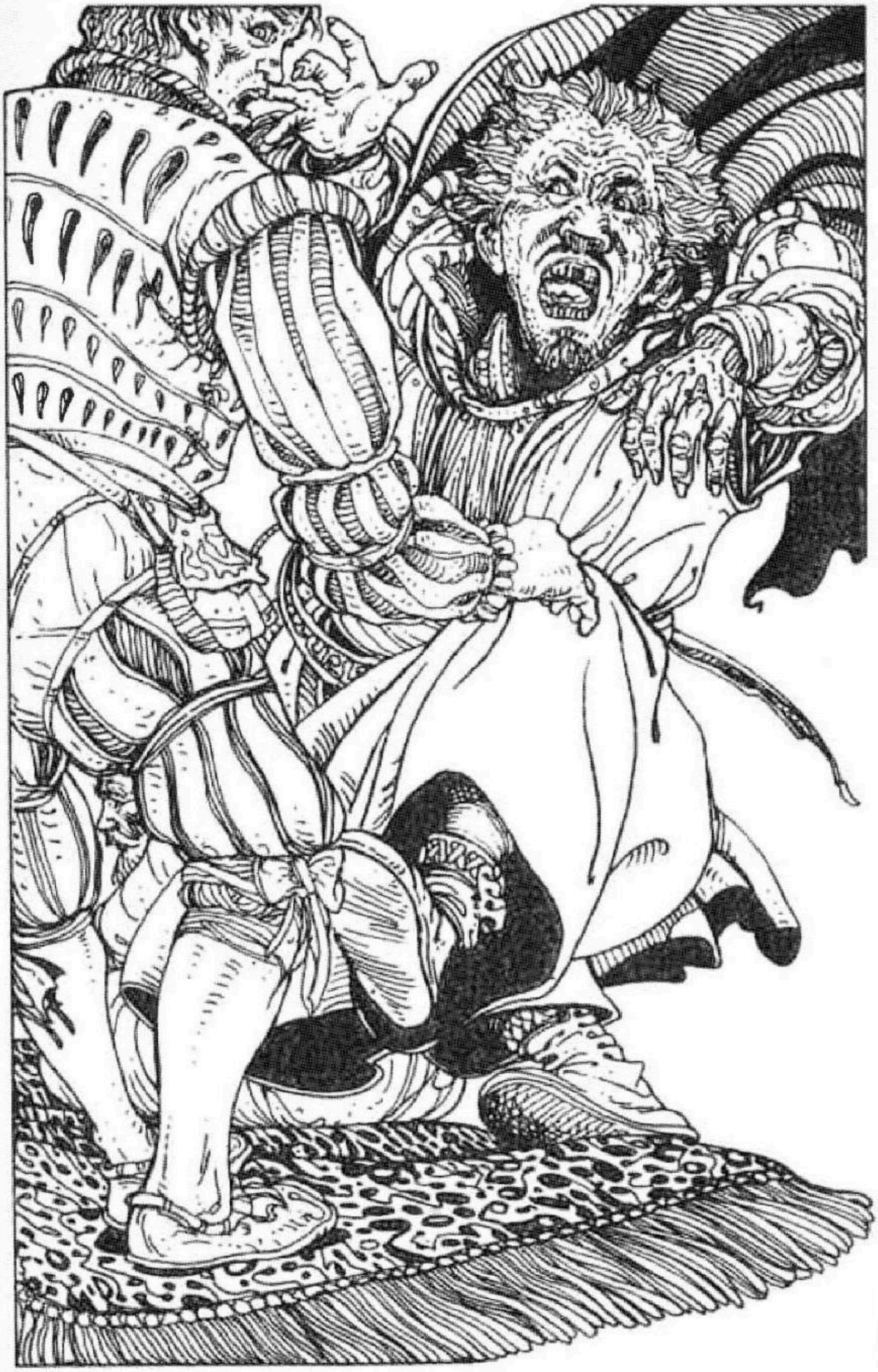
19

You ram the bullet home, take aim and shoot. Your aim is true, but Mencius's magic is stronger. The bullet ricochets off his body, as if it had struck the finest steel, and embeds itself in the wall. Mencius doesn't even flinch. Turn to **91**.

20

You are an experienced magehunter, so you act without conscious thought. In the time it takes to draw two breaths you wet your sword blade with the wizard's blood, then swing it at his neck. His invulnerability to earthly weapons is destroyed by the touch of his blood, and you cleave his head from his body. Looking down at your sword, you notice that it is rather different. Your practical steel broadsword seems to have been transformed into a fancy rapier with a bejewelled hilt. You feel strangely different and you notice for the first time that your clothes are now red. You retrieve your rope of human hair from Mencius's corpse. Your immediate problem concerns what to do with Mencius's body. After you deal with that, you can begin to search for the young Margrave and find a way back home. Will you:

Bury the body?	Turn to **132**
Burn the body?	Turn to **345**
Throw the body in the river below?	Turn to **200**



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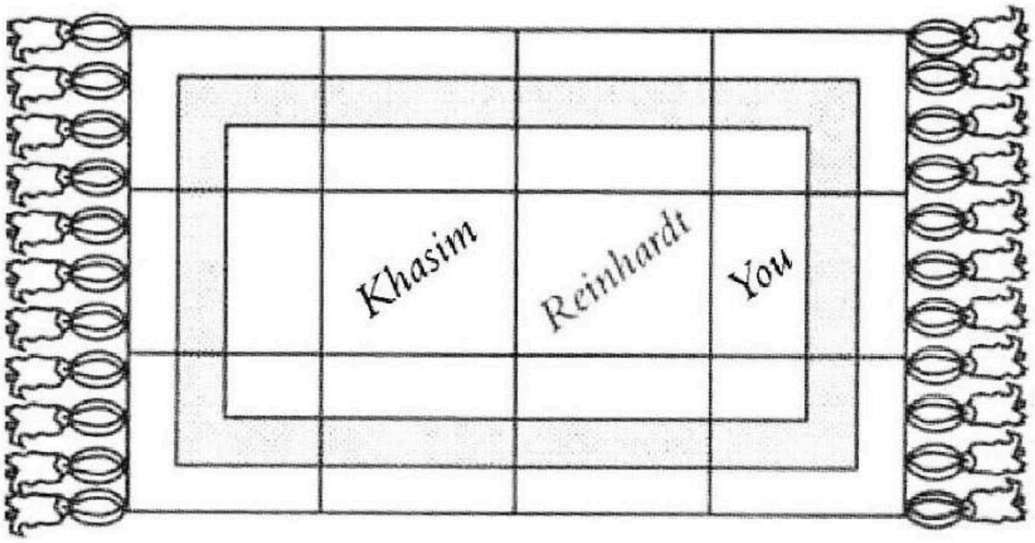
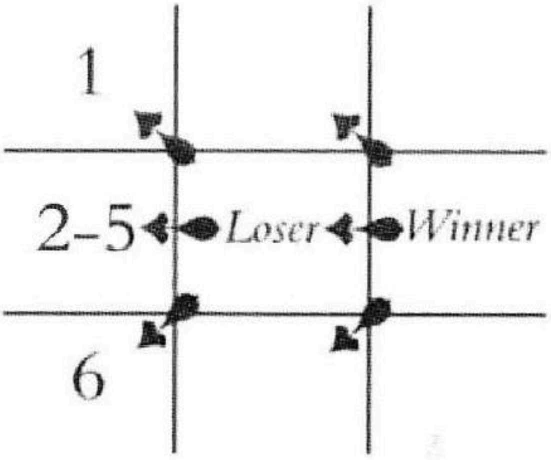


This diagram shows the flying carpet. Khasim is sitting in the position marked with his name. You are sitting at the rear of the carpet, with Reinhardt in front of you. Conduct the fight between the two of you as normal, but with the following additional rules: whoever *loses* an Attack Round will be forced back. Roll one dice and consult the following chart to see in which direction they are pushed back.



The winner must then follow up by moving to the square in front of the loser, as indicated by the arrows on the diagram (if the winner is to the left of the diagram then simply reverse the positions). If the loser is pushed back over the edge of the carpet, he will fall off. If either of you enters the square containing Khasim, the whole carpet will shake. You must then roll two dice for you and two dice for Reinhardt: in each case, the result must be less than or equal to the SKILL score of that character for him to be safe. If the result is greater than your or Reinhardt's SKILL, then you (or Reinhardt) have fallen off the carpet. Keep track of where you and Reinhardt are on the carpet by using counters or pencil marks. In each Attack Round, you do not have to use all your SKILL in the attack. You can choose (*before* you roll the dice) how much SKILL you will use. Reinhardt will always attack you with all his SKILL. LUCK can be used as usual to change the result. If you defeat Reinhardt without anyone falling off the carpet, turn to **209**. If Reinhardt falls off, turn to **72**. If *you* fall (or both of you fall), turn to **60**.

22

Al-Bakbuk waves away your money, but he seems pleased at the offer. He gives you a parting gift of a glass to remember him by (note down 'Al-Bakbuk's glass' on your *Adventure Sheet*) and advises you, if you are ever in the city Kallamehr, to seek out his brother, Al-Haddar, the famous storyteller. Now will you:

Go shopping?	Turn to **248**
Try to pick up the trail?	Turn to **322**
Head for the city of Kallamehr?	Turn to **348**

23

The remaining courtiers close in on you. You can't hope to fight them all, so your only chance is to flee. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **292**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **197**.

24

The rope of human hair is too precious for you to abandon it here, so you tie the wizard's hands with one end, then cut off the remainder. Although he will probably be able to get free, you should have enough time to escape. Leaving the cave, you face a choice. If you wish to go south-west, the direction indicated by the mage, turn to **118**. If you would rather travel in a different direction, turn to **327**.

25

After a tiring climb, you get a view stretching for several kilometres in all directions. To the north, you can make out nothing but increasingly higher mountains. To the south, in the distance, you can see the faint glimmer of the sea. Following the direction of the road, you can make out a city, apparently larger than the town from where you have just been expelled. If you choose to walk along the road, turn to **76**. If, instead, you make for the coast, turn to **393**.

26

Pushing the corpses to one side, you force Reinhardt to the back of the alcove and flatten yourself against the wall, hoping to get the jump on your enemy. The sounds draw closer; you choose your moment and, sword flashing, you leap. A head is sliced from a body and your follow-up thrust badly injures another, but it's no use. Six opponents face you – six merciless killers who are used to the dark. You fight like a cornered wolf, knowing that this is your last stand. You take three more of the subterranean subhumans before finally succumbing to the odds. It is a glorious last battle, but Mencius has escaped your grasp.

27

Your sense of direction is quite good, so you set off straight towards the city, reasoning that, as you get close, you are bound to come upon roads. Sure enough, before the day is over you have struck upon a fairly broad highway – and some of the inhabitants of this strange land. Their loose, colourful clothing is as strange as the guttural noises which pass for their language. However, the five you meet – apparently merchants by trade – seem to take a liking to you and offer you food, which you devour eagerly. You spend the night in their camp, a little suspicious; next morning, however, you awaken, unharmed, and your cheerful hosts once again offer you food and drink. By gestures, you make it clear that you are making for the city. So are they, it turns out. Over the next couple of days' travel, you pick up a few names and phrases in their language, but upon reaching the city you are barely more able to express yourself than before. As you pass through the gates of Kallamehr, remarking upon the unusually bold architecture, the leader of the five merchants presents you with a wineskin and bids you farewell (note the wineskin on your *Adventure Sheet*). Turn to **100**.

28

'This is no use,' says Reinhardt. 'Look where your precious magehunting methods have got us – precisely nowhere!' He then sets off, walking away. For a moment you consider abandoning him here and returning to the town, but good sense prevails. You hurry after him as quickly as you can in the stifling heat. The two of you continue until nightfall, having seen no sign of civilization. Check your *Adventure Sheet*. If you have the word 'bandage' written down, turn to **53**. If you do not, turn to **84** if the 'Switch' box is ticked or to **321** if it isn't.

29

Mencius can still protect himself, but he is vulnerable to your weapon.

MENCIUS	SKILL 5	STAMINA 8

Fight Mencius as normal. However, he is not using a sword; instead, he will attack you with magic. If your Attack Strength is greater than his, it means you have managed to strike him and may inflict damage as normal. If your Attack Strength is less than or equal to his, it means that you were unable to find an opening.

His magical blast will hit you every round even if your Attack Strength is greater. In the first round you must lose 1 point from your STAMINA; then, as the power of the magic amulet is overcome, in every subsequent round you must lose 2 points of STAMINA. If you reduce Mencius to 2 or fewer points of STAMINA, turn to **124** if you have the word 'reflect' on your *Adventure Sheet* or to **174** if you don't.

30

The thing flies slowly, so you have time to cock your pistol, take careful aim and fire (cross 1 bullet off your *Adventure Sheet*). The majestic creature crashes to earth. You hurry over to where it lies and confirm that it is no longer breathing. If you return to the ruins and search for the monster's lair, turn to **311**. If you make your way to the sea, turn to **264**.

31

You mention the name of Al-Nashshar to a few passers-by, but they just shrug and walk away. Frustrated by your failure to find him, you follow the main thoroughfare through the city until you come to a large square, overlooked by an imposing tower which is perched on the cliff overlooking the sea. In the square, the city's principal market is in full swing. If you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **349**. Otherwise, turn to **267**.

32

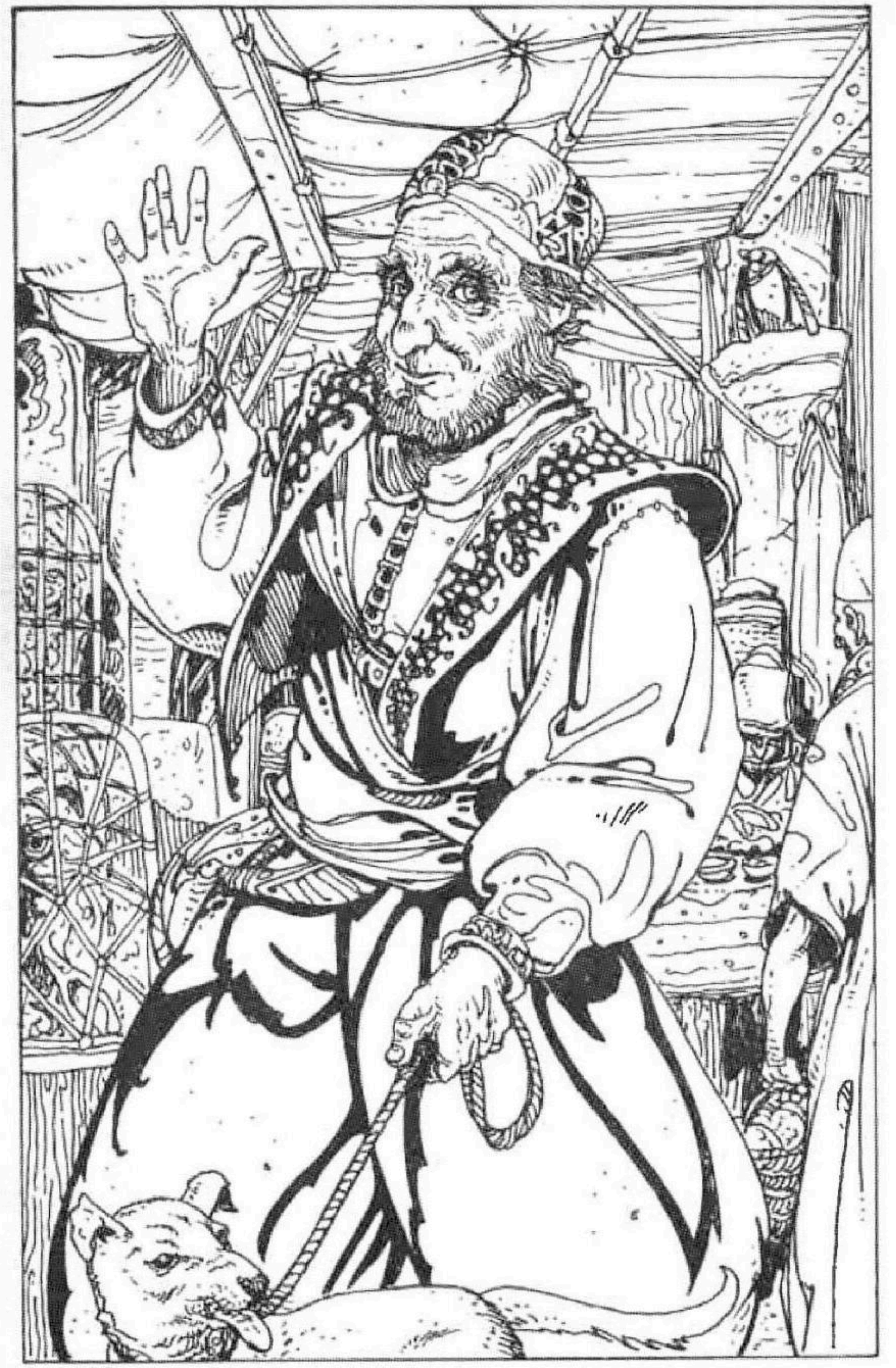
Composing yourself once more, you toss the stone into the circle. It strikes the exact centre, then bounces in an unexpected direction. A strong reading! Tracing a line from the centre, through the stone, you work out the direction you will have to travel by making for a distinctive cluster of rocks high up on the mountainside. Despite the punishing glare of the sun, the two of you make good time, discovering a mountain path which leads in roughly the right direction. Turn to **52**.

33

You gingerly open the box. It's empty. 'I want my property back,' says Mencius. 'Bring it to the Rangor Tower before nightfall and I will make your death mercifully short.' So saying, he strides off. It doesn't seem like much of an offer. If you want to go straight to the Rangor Tower now, turn to **312**. Otherwise, note down the number '312' on your *Adventure Sheet*. Now you know where Mencius is; if you are given the option to go to the place where Mencius is, you may turn to **312**. Now turn to **241**.

34

For an instant the globe flares up brightly, almost blinding you. Then you are surrounded by utter blackness. All feeling disappears, first from your limbs, then from your body. Is this death? A memory is nagging at you, but you cannot place it . . . until light bursts upon your eyes – torchlight. You are in a cell. A crack sunders the floor. Somehow you have returned to the Margrave's castle. However, you have failed in your mission. You must live with that failure for the rest of your days.



35

First you must acquire a dog. In the marketplace in the middle of town you find a bustling maze of stalls, and a short search reveals an animal trainer with a suitable hound for sale. Despite your shortcomings when it comes to language, it's quite easy to communicate that you want the dog. The merchant in charge of the stall indicates that he requires 5 Gold Pieces for the animal. Five Gold Pieces! It's a fortune, more than a hundred times the value of the hound. If you have the money and want to buy the dog, turn to **338**. If you can't or won't pay, turn to **184**.

36

Glad of your resolution to keep your pistol primed, you drop the silver bullet down the barrel, ram it home, aim and shoot. The shot hits him full in the chest. He staggers and stares down at the wound. Then, with a banshee howl, he tenses his whole body. The bullet shoots out of the wound back at you, hitting you in the upper arm (lose 3 points from your STAMINA). He seems slightly dazed by his effort, but you have no way of knowing how soon he will recover. You realize that this is in fact Mencius, somehow transferred into another body. If you try to finish him off now, turn to **247**. If you take the chance to flee, turn to **376**.

37

Collecting what loose wood and tinder you can find, you build a fire out in the open. Once it is lit, you watch the flames carefully. They appear to flicker slightly, pointing along the mountainside towards a saddle. If you follow the direction in which the flames pointed, turn to **229**. If you climb the mountain to get a better view, turn to **395**.

38

The creature fights both with its claws and with its vicious bite. As it fights, it continues to grunt at you in an eerie, half-human voice.

GOLDEN LION-LORD SKILL 9 STAMINA 14

If you reduce the Lion-lord to 3 or fewer points of STAMINA, turn to **157**.

39

'My story is a warning to mind one's own business and trust in Hazah. Those who meddle in the affairs of the powerful will suffer a terrible fate. Know, then, that in the time of the former ruler of Kallamehr, the Caliph Carolina, the country was beset by a terrible disaster. A wicked sorcerer from another world, Bythos by name, conspired with Sige the Silent, on the Grand Council, to conquer the whole land and overthrow Hazah's sacred ruler. While the army guarded the northern borders against the threat of invasion from Bei-Han, Bythos's army of country folk, whose souls he held in thrall, swept towards the city from the east. Who could halt their advance? Brave Ramedes, hero of Kallamehr, was the only possible saviour, but he was away on one of his many voyages of adventure. Just when all hope seemed to have fled, however, he returned and . . .' Al-Fakik's head falls forward on to his chest. Moments later a rasping snore emerges. You prod him awake, and he leaps up with a start. 'Be off with you, rascal!' he shouts. 'Think you can steal my money, eh?' He snatches up a knife and brandishes it in front of your face. If you make a hasty exit, turn to **205** if you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*; otherwise, mark a cross on it and turn to **241**. Your only other option is to fight him.

AL-FAKIK SKILL 5 STAMINA 5

If you win, turn to **386**.

40

The guards look you up and down with undisguised contempt, and for a moment you think they are going to challenge you, but there is no need to worry – they gesture for you to pass through the gates. Soon you are among bustling streets, full of strange, dark people. You notice that most are wearing clothes of silk – which would strain even the Margrave's purse. Their chatter is incomprehensible; if you are to get anywhere, you will have to find a means of communicating with them. If you start looking for Mencius immediately, turn to **198**. If you spend a little time getting settled in, turn to **293**.

41

You hurry back to the room in which you talked with the thief. You burst into the room, but he has already left with his spoils. If you hide, waiting for him to come back, turn to **390**. If you search the room and take something of equal value to what you lost, turn to **218**.

42

You are not equipped for such a titanic magical battle. Mencius seems more potent than ever, hurling spell after spell at his opponent. You sidle around behind him to attack, but he notices you out of the corner of his eye. Almost casually, he flings a bolt of fire at your head, consigning you to oblivion.

43

Green smoke seeps from the ground and fills the room. Coughing and spluttering, you abandon the spell and fling wide the door . . . just as a squad of guards arrives. The sergeant has you seized by his men. You are dragged before the Chamberlain, who seems to have emerged as the new ruler of the domain. Unfortunately, you have never got on particularly well with this fellow.

'We caught him red-handed performing the Arts of the Evil One,' announces the sergeant who arrested you, 'and this was found in his possession,' he adds, passing Mencius's Book of Craft to the Chamberlain.

He flips a couple of pages with distaste. 'Do you have anything to say before sentence is passed?' he enquires, arching his eyebrows. You protest that you were attempting to pursue the mage who kidnapped Lord Reinhardt, but you trail off as it seems obvious the Chamberlin is deaf to your words. 'It is well known that those exposed to the practice of sorcery are often drawn by its allure. Despite your past meritorious conduct, there can be no exceptions. You will be executed at dawn.'

44

You finish off the Spider Mage with a thrust to the heart. Exhilaration floods you: another sorcerer has fallen to the greatest foe of evil! Quickly searching through his lair, you are surprised to find a silver representation of the Holy Symbol. When you pick it up, you find a prayer written on the back *in your language*! Sadly, mages show no fear of a Holy Symbol, but it may be of use nevertheless. Note it down on your *Adventure Sheet*, then mark a cross and turn to **241**.

45

The Skeletons close in, blades whirling. From the chamber above comes a mocking laugh; it is Mencius, into whose trap you have fallen. But Kurt, snarling ferociously, leaps at the Skeletons massed in front of the stairs. They fall back, cowed by your loyal hound's fierceness. If you can only fight your way through to the stairs . . .

	SKILL	STAMINA
First SKELETON	6	5
Second SKELETON	6	5

While you are fighting these two Skeletons one at a time, the others are pressing in. Kurt falls, finally cut to pieces by the bronze blades. If you have a companion with you, he, too, falls (note down the word 'lost' on your *Adventure Sheet*). If you defeat the Skeletons in 8 Attack Rounds or less, turn to **392**. If you do not, turn to **270**.

46

Smoke suddenly begins to pour from your ruby ring, coalescing into the shape of a huge and frightful, man-like being. Before you can react, the creature picks you up and flies you over to the ship, dropping you in a heap in front of the brightly clad figure. You still cannot see his face, just a pair of sharp eyes regarding you with malicious humour. He says a few words to you in a language you don't recognize, then clicks his fingers. The huge creature from the ring disappears. Turn to **300**.

47

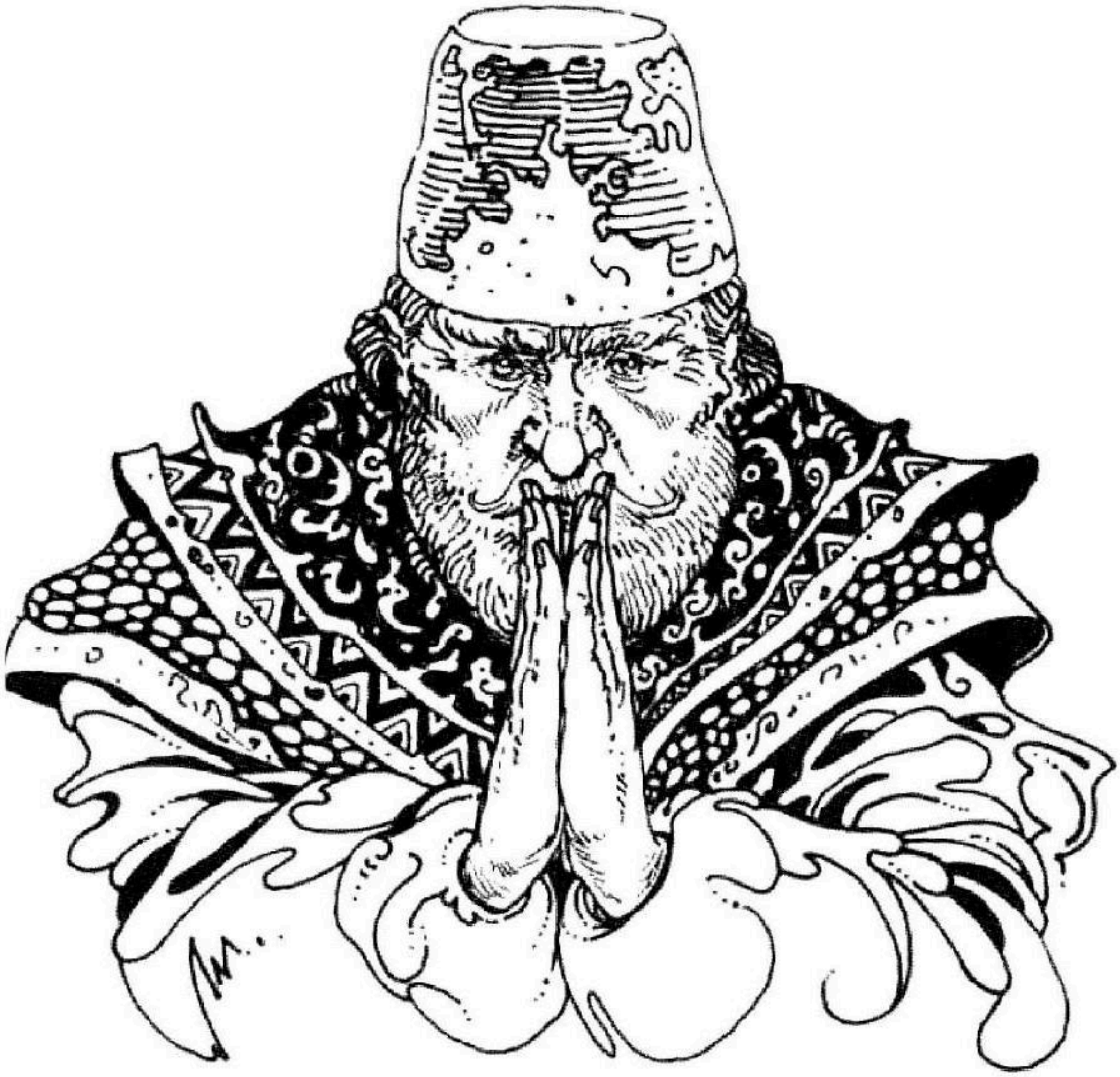
You soon discover that the current ruler of Kallamehr is Asiah Albudur. Her palace lies in the middle of the city, near an imposing statue of a woman carrying a sword in each hand. If you apply for an audience with Asiah Albudur, to warn her about the menace of Mencius, mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet*, then turn to **197** if you have the word 'bath' on your *Adventure Sheet*, or to **162** if you haven't. If you simply wish to make enquiries, turn to **284** if you have the word 'early' written down or to **356** if you haven't.

48

'By the way,' says your unusual host, 'my name is Khasim the Unworthy. Anything that is within my power to help you in your mission, I will do.' If you have the shackles key, turn to **180**. If you have a Shauca Scar, turn to **367**. Otherwise, turn to **396**.

49

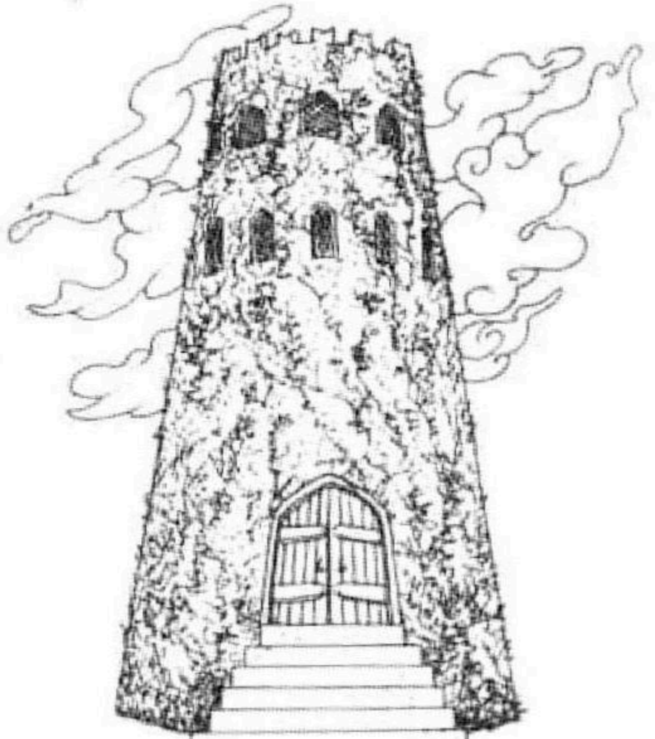
The tunnel continues past a row of doors with barred openings; a face is pressed against the bars of the first. Edging closer, you recognize Reinhardt! The look of blank desperation on his face makes your scalp prickle. Turn to **109**.



50

'Mencius!' you exclaim.

'Oh, so you don't know about that,' says your unlikely benefactor. He clicks his fingers again, and the huge man-like creature appears again. 'Genie, a mirror!' he commands. In an instant, a mirror appears in front of your face. You find yourself staring at Reinhardt's reflection. 'A side-effect of entering this bubble of existence,' the comically dressed character continues. 'Your bodies were switched. Mencius is now in your body, in Kallamehr. By the way, I'll have my ring back, if it's all the same to you.' He clicks his fingers again and the ring floats out of your pocket and into his hands (cross the ruby ring off your *Adventure Sheet*). Now turn to **368**.

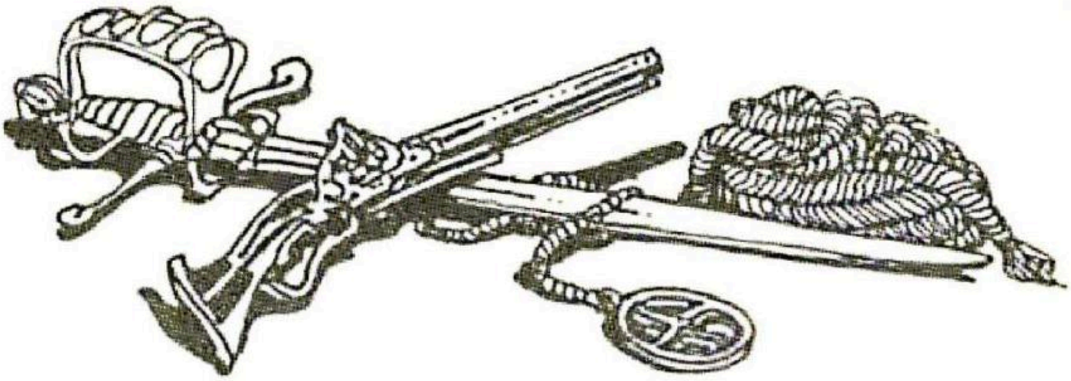


51

You urge Kurt to sniff around and pick up a trail. Within minutes he has found a scent and is tugging at the leash. He leads you along a side street to a flight of stairs by the side of a tumble-down building; they lead down into some kind of cellar. Cautiously, you follow Kurt down into a dark chamber, faintly illuminated by chinks of light from holes in the ceiling. Your sixth sense warns you of imminent danger and you look up. Flattened against the ceiling is a wiry, bald man with sunken eyes. Kurt snarls, and the man drops from the ceiling on to you. His movements remind you of a spider but, as you fight, you quickly discover that he is vulnerable to your weapon.

SPIDER MAGE SKILL 7 STAMINA 10

Kurt will also attack each round, causing 1 point of damage to the Spider Mage. If you reduce him to 1 point of STAMINA, he begs for mercy. If you spare him, turn to **339**; otherwise, turn to **44**.



52

The path finally passes through a sheltered valley, its cool air a welcome relief from the blistering sun. At the far end a plume of smoke emerges from a hole in the rock. Below it, a dark opening suggests a cave. You approach the cave mouth warily, peering into its inky blackness. You can't be sure, but a faint sound seems to be coming from the cave, possibly a human voice. Abruptly it stops. You move into the opening, trying to determine whether it was *really* a faint glimmer of light you saw. Sure enough, a dancing light appears, easily recognizable as a torch. Preparing yourself for action, you wait expectantly. The torch-bearer turns out to be an old man, dark of skin, and with a cloth wrapped round his head. He jabbers at you, then stands, puzzled, when you respond by asking him who he is. After a while he holds up his hand for you to wait, and trots back into the darkness, returning a few minutes later with a book. Setting the torch into a wall-sconce, he flips over the pages of the book. When he finds the place he needs, he starts to mutter and gestures with his free hand. He is a sorcerer, casting some kind of spell! If you attack immediately, turn to **81**. If you prefer to wait to see what happens, turn to **324**.

53

You settle down for the night. Reinhardt, no doubt exhausted by the day's walk, starts snoring immediately. You lie down, but somehow sleep evades you. You cannot help but scan the starry sky, searching in vain for a familiar constellation. You slip into a half-sleep, in which you watch through half-closed eyes as four hooded, cloaked figures steal surreptitiously towards you. It is only when they are bending over Reinhardt's sleeping form, and you catch the glint of a weapon, that you realize they are not part of a dream. You leap up, grabbing your sword, and surprise one of them with a thrust that pierces his chest. Then you turn your attention to the others. Fight them in turn.

SHROUDED SKULKER SKILL 8 STAMINA 6

If you are still fighting the Skulker after four Attack Rounds, make sure you have made a note of his current SKILL and STAMINA, then turn to **307**. If you defeat the Skulker in four rounds or less, fight the next two opponents, one at a time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
Second SKULKER	7	6
Third SKULKER	8	6

If you defeat both the Skulkers, turn to **160**.

54

'There was no time for Jaddar to load another magic arrow before Al-Azrad, in the form of a snake, was upon him. The battle was mighty indeed . . .'

Al-Haddar has told his tale so vividly and with such expressive gestures that you feel you are living the story. Now he starts to wrestle you, calling, 'Who will win, the snake or the man?'

AL-AZRAD THE SNAKE SKILL 6 STAMINA 6

Fight as normal; however, you cannot die in this fight. If you defeat the snake, recover 2 points of STAMINA for every three lost, and turn to **294**. If you lose, turn to **151**.

55

Your drinking companion is eager to teach you his language. You learn that his name is Al-Bakbuk, and he displays a keen interest in conversing. When the time comes to leave the tavern, Al-Bakbuk offers you the hospitality of his home. Over the next few days you slowly acquire a limited vocabulary and the ability to string a few words together (note down 'basic kal' on your *Adventure Sheet*). Al-Bakbuk is quite lavish with his generosity, but you know that you will have to bid him farewell sooner or later. If you leave him without offering a gift, turn to **315**. Otherwise, you can offer him money (turn to **22**), or, if you have it, a piece of jewellery (turn to **372**) or a ruby ring (turn to **161**).

56

The two of you step on to the carpet and sit down. You feel a little foolish sitting there, until the carpet floats up into the air! It floats gently for a moment, then Khasim says, 'To Kallamehr!' and you shoot off with the speed of a diving falcon. Turn to **93**.

57

Note down the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*. How will you find such a capricious youth as Reinhardt? If you have 'basic kal' or 'kal', you may search for a storyteller (turn to **323**). Otherwise, turn to **205**.

58

After a while you lose sight of the smoke, but you do happen upon a mountain path which seems to be going in the right direction. Following it into a shady valley, you catch sight of the smoke plume once again. It is issuing from a hole in the rock wall, at the base of which is a cave mouth. From the cave steps a strange man, clad in loose, crimson robes of some fine material, and with a cloth of emerald green wrapped round the top of his head. When he sees you, he pauses, then tentatively calls out some unrecognizable phrase. When you reply by asking him where he comes from, he peers at you in bewilderment. Then he beckons you to follow him and disappears into the cave. By the time you reach the cave mouth, he has been swallowed up in the inky blackness. After a minute or so, however, he returns, carrying a book in one hand and a guttering torch in the other. The torch he sets in a bracket on the wall, then he thumbs through the book. Alighting on a page, he starts to mutter, and he gestures with his free hand. He is a sorcerer, casting some kind of spell! If you attack him immediately, turn to **99**. If you wait to see what happens, turn to **262**.

59

You are just preparing an effective way of tackling him when strong hands seize you. Some of the tent-dwellers must have been suspicious of your actions. On hearing the uproar, the magician emerges from his tent and starts talking with the others in a language you don't recognize – it is not the local tongue, and certainly not your own. Then, brandishing a long black staff, he faces you. The tent-dwellers release you. Staring at the magician this close, you realize that he is not Mencius. Nevertheless you must fight him.

SABA	SKILL 9	STAMINA 10

If you defeat him, the tent-dwellers allow you to go on your way – apparently their code of honour is satisfied. Turn to **241**.

60

You plummet towards the distant earth, your body twisting as you fall and pressure building to agony in your chest and ears. The ground races towards you and . . . Turn to **214.**

61

'I can help you in several ways,' says Khasim. 'First, I can give you some protection from his magic.' He hands you an amulet with a chain to go round your neck (note down the Magic Amulet on your *Adventure Sheet*). 'I don't guarantee that it'll protect you completely, but it should help against a direct attack. Secondly, I can advise you to be careful. Because our world is so rich in magic, Mencius's power is growing daily. He will no doubt already have gained some knowledge of Kallamehr. Finally,' he says, unfurling a short, luridly patterned carpet, 'I can get you to Kallamehr quickly and secretly . . . We fly in thirty minutes!' Turn to **353** if you have any of the following noted down on your *Adventure Sheet*: turban, Vizier's Robe, Al-Bakbuk's Glass, or Kurt. If you have none of them, turn to **188**.

62

Falling . . . falling . . . falling – again you experience the nausea of body swap. Now it is you whose face is pressed against the bars of a tiny cell. 'Get me out of here!' you hiss urgently at Reinhardt.

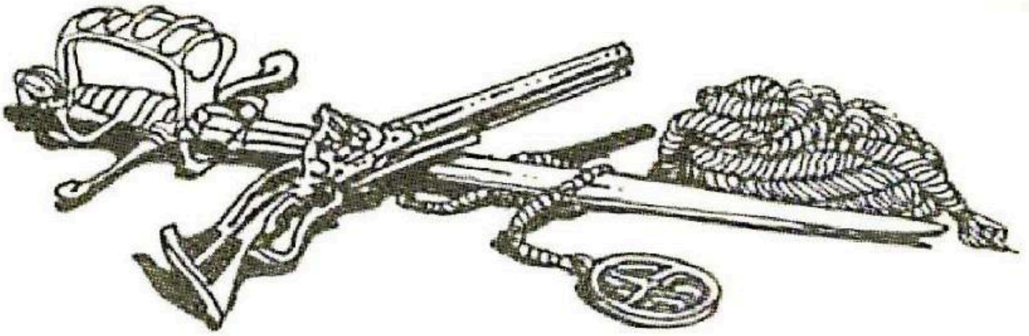
'No chance!' the cur replies. 'I'd have to fight the guards! I'm getting out of here.' He hurries off along the tunnel to the right. You never see him again. You discover your own fate quite soon: the creatures who have captured you use you as a slave for the few years of your miserable life that remain. Your quest ends far below the surface, as a slave of the Dark Elves.

63

If you were stung by the scorpion, turn to **181**. If you managed to defeat it without being stung, turn to **242**.

64

You follow the beach for about a kilometre, noticing an increasing quantity of shingle. You round a headland, looking out across a wide bay. The beach continues a short distance, ending at steep cliffs. A little way out to sea, a small boat is sailing in towards the coast beyond the cliffs. If you turn back the way you came, turn to **287**. If you press on and try to scale the cliffs, turn to **114**.



65

A smug look crosses the bestial features of the thing as you attack, only to be replaced by surprise and outrage as you strike a good blow. Then you are embroiled in a desperate battle.

DEMON OF THE RING SKILL 12 STAMINA 16

If you defeat the Demon, note down the word 'Genie' and turn to **169**.

66

Ramming the silver bullet home, you aim carefully and shoot. The bullet hits Mencius full in the forehead. He stares back at you, the gleaming bullet embedded in his head like a third eye. His features contort with rage – or is it agony? – and the bullet shoots back out of his head, leaving a hole, then the edges of the hole reknit themselves. Mencius stands quite still. His eyes are staring madly at you, but you avoid his gaze. 'Enough! I had thought to make your death interesting, but now I will deny you even that privilege!' says Mencius. He raises his hands above his head and shrieks like a wolf. Then he dashes them down, releasing a fizzing blast of magical power at you. If you have a Magic Amulet, turn to **289**. If you haven't, turn to **186**.

67

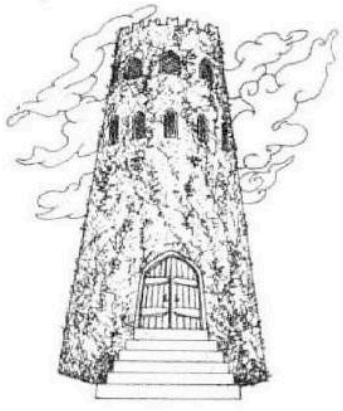
Erase the following items from your *Adventure Sheet*: pistol, 3 bullets, box of powder, broadsword, undyed clothes, mirrors, compass needle and silver pieces. Erase *all* your Provisions. In addition to anything you acquired since passing through the magic portal, you now have the following: rapier, fine red clothes, jewellery, rope of human hair and 10 Gold Pieces. Lose 3 points from your SKILL and 6 points from your STAMINA (this loss is permanent until you are told specifically that it is restored). If you try to find a way to switch bodies with Reinhardt, turn to **276**. Or you can prepare to move; turn to **175**.

68

By following the river, you make your way back to the town. Although you've disposed of one wizard, your principal foe still remains. It seems that your best chance may be to make for the largest city in the area, for you know that Mencius prefers crowds. A few enquiries around town soon elicit the name of the city. Turn to **348**.

69

The body of the Demon explodes in a sheet of flame, then shoots straight up in a column of smoke until nothing is left of it. You are back where you started, but at least you have learnt something of the local language. You also have a lead: Al-Bakbuk told you about the city of Kallamehr, which will draw Mencius like a magnet; if you are to track him down, you must search for him there. First, you make your way back to the town. Al-Bakbuk is overjoyed at seeing you again and demands that you tell him your story. You explain what happened, offering him the now useless (but still precious) ruby ring by way of a goodbye present. Turn to **372**.



70

The spell comes easily to you. As you cast it, Mencius's eyelids droop and his breathing slows. Finally he stands there, unmoving, his head bowed. You take a step closer and his head snaps up, his eyes glaring at you malevolently. 'Stick to what you're good at!' he snarls. Turn to **91**.

71

While easing the pressure on the sorcerer, you slip the rope up round his neck. He realizes the implication of this and eyes you fearfully. He looks a pitiful, powerless figure – but, as you well know, mages are a tricky lot. You try to think of a way of getting round the language barrier, but for that you will need free hands – for obvious reasons this is not possible. If you have a shackles key, turn to **355**. If you have a Shauca Scar, turn to **104**. Otherwise, turn to **265**.

72

Reinhardt is gone – surely no one could survive a fall from that height? Note down the word 'missing' on your *Adventure Sheet*; also erase any items Reinhardt was carrying.

'I am sorry about the death of your countryman,' says Khasim, 'but we must nevertheless dispose of Mencius.' Since you were not using weapons, you recover 2 points of STAMINA for every 3 you lost in the fight. Turn to **93**.

73

Note down 'fame' on your *Adventure Sheet*. In the tavern, Al-Bakbuk wastes no time in telling everyone all about your achievement. Most seem sceptical, but all the same you are quickly surrounded by an admiring crowd. Unfortunately, one of them, a thug of a man with large muscles and narrow eyes, takes the opportunity to challenge you to a fight.

MUSCULAR THUG SKILL 6 STAMINA 9

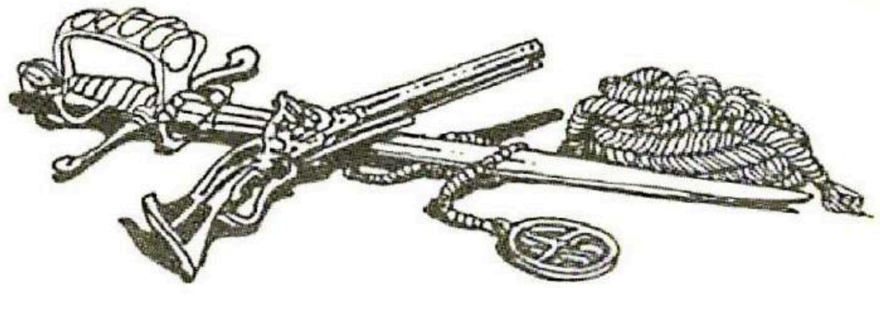
If you reduce the thug to 1 point of STAMINA, turn to **137**.

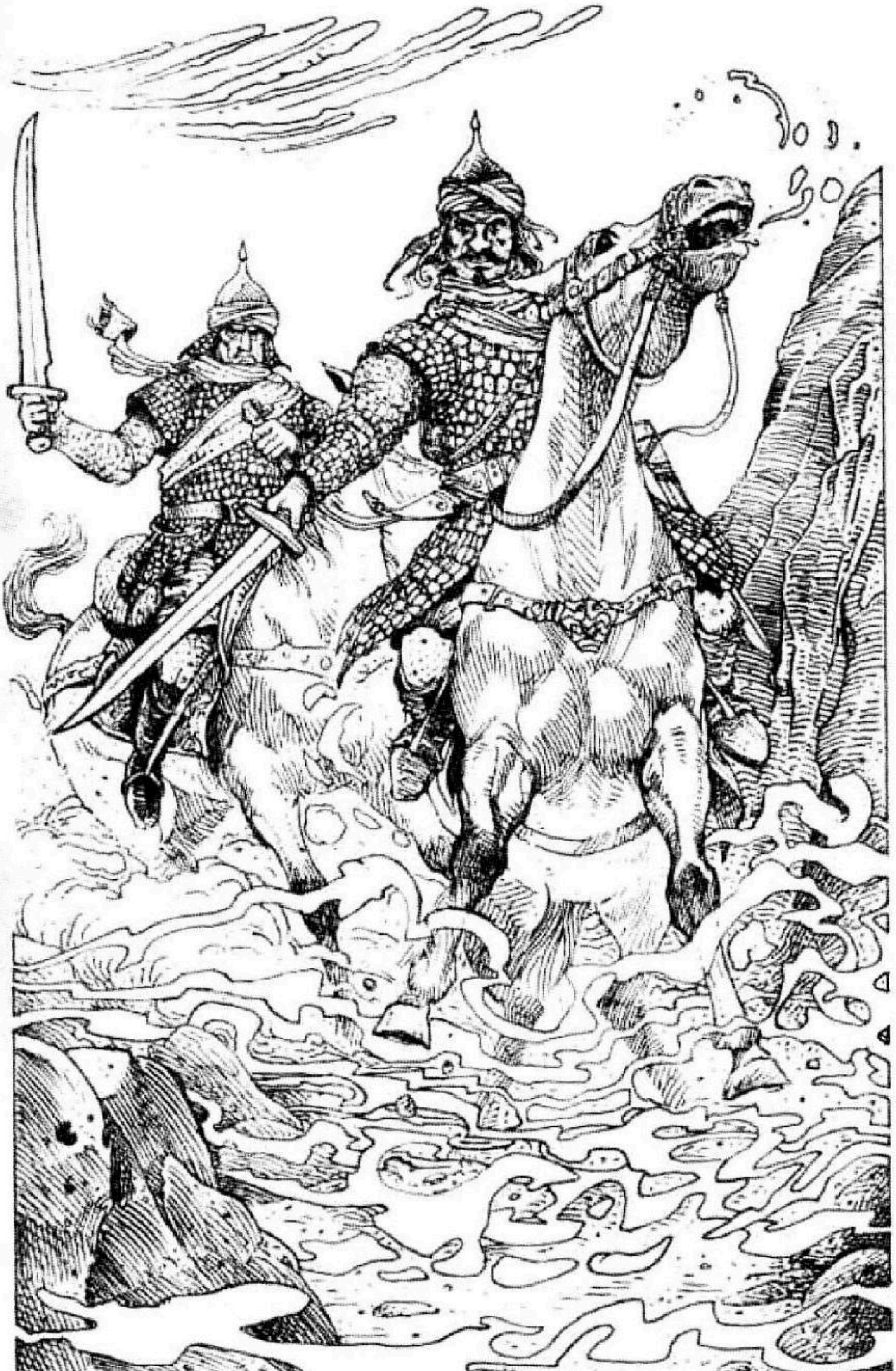
74

Choosing your subjects with care, you make discreet enquiries concerning recent newcomers to the city. You learn about all sorts of strange arrivals, but one in particular seems to match Mencius's current appearance. His clothing is described as outlandish, and his hair-colour also fits. Going by the name of Saba, he has established himself rapidly in the city by means of his regular performances of magic in the bazaar – an area of the city made up of tents and frequented by lower-class merchants. If you continue to make enquiries, turn to **136** if you have the word 'early' written on your *Adventure Sheet* or to **233** if you don't. If you hurry on to the bazaar in search of Saba, turn to **364**.

75

In the pockets of your fine red clothes you discover 10 Gold Pieces and some jewellery that you guess must be worth far more. On the ground near you is a key. You recognize it as the key to the shackles used to restrain Mencius. You pick it up and put it in your pocket. Erase all equipment from your Equipment List except the following: rapier, fine red clothing, shackles key. Erase *all* your Provisions. For treasure, you have 10 Gold Pieces plus jewellery. Lose 3 points from your SKILL and 6 points from your STAMINA (this loss is permanent until you are told specifically that it is restored). If your ankle hurts, turn to **187**. Otherwise, turn to **336**.





76

Up ahead, a dust cloud signals the approach of riders. As they close on you, it becomes possible to distinguish two horses. The riders are dressed in some kind of armour made of overlapping scales. When they get near, they pull up and call out to you. If you have 'kal' or 'basic kal' written on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **211**. Otherwise, turn to **399**.

77

You should have remembered the elementary rules of magehunting. 'Reinhardt' throws back his head and laughs – a laugh of pure evil. 'You moron!' he cries. 'I switched bodies with that worm Reinhardt as a side effect of the nexus. I said I would have my revenge, and so I shall – you will serve me until the end of your days.' Your will trickles away like the last grains of sand in an hourglass. Mencius has trapped you. You are his slave now.

78

You find a quiet back-alley and scratch the Holy Symbol in the dirt. After composing yourself for a while, you pick up a pebble and toss it into the circle. Now that you have some idea as to which direction to follow, you walk along the alley to its end and arrive at . . . the town wall. According to your divination, the sorcerer is to be found outside the town. Hurrying to the gate, you leave the strange settlement, moving in the direction indicated by the pebble. After several hours, the light fades; you have still detected no trace of Mencius. You settle down for a hard night. Your body aches and you quickly drift off to sleep. If you have a wizard's pouch, turn to **286**. If you have a Shauca or Sneeka Scar, turn to **150**. Otherwise, turn to **341**.

79

The Skeletons close in, blades whirling. From the chamber above comes a mocking laugh; it is Mencius, into whose trap you have fallen. Swinging the sacred mace, you reduce two Skeletons to piles of bones. The next wave are more cautious. If only you can hack your way through them to the staircase.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First SKELETON	6	5
Second SKELETON	6	5
Third SKELETON	6	5

Fight the Skeletons one at a time. If you defeat them in 10 Attack Rounds or less, turn to **392**. If you do not, turn to **270**.

80

You make your way along the road for two days; by foraging you manage to find enough food for basic survival. Finally you arrive at the city, passing through an impressive arch to enter its narrow streets. Turn to **100**.

81

How will you attack the wizard? (You should choose an option only if you have the appropriate item.) Do you:

Strike him with a rapier?	Turn to **237**
Shoot him with a pistol?	Turn to **330**
Strike him with a broadsword?	Turn to **7**
Bind him with rope of human hair?	Turn to **155**

Or, if you choose not to attack the wizard after all, turn to **341**.

82

Cross off 2 Provisions from your *Adventure Sheet* without recovering any STAMINA. At last you see a building up ahead. You are so exhausted you simply burst through the door without knocking. Inside, the groups of tables and chairs suggest an inn. Sure enough, a corpulent, bald fellow scurries out of a back room with a plate of food, which you eagerly devour, and a cup of wine, which you drain in a single draught. Recover 2 points of STAMINA. No one else is staying at the inn, so the innkeeper treats you like royalty. After a night's sleep and another excellent meal, you feel far better. The innkeeper asks you for 2 Gold Pieces for your food and board (turn to **295** if you can't or won't pay; otherwise, erase them from your *Adventure Sheet*). You leave the inn and press on over a mountain pass. From here, it seems, the way leads downwards. Your spirits rise as you make your way down the mountainside. Turn to **365**.

83

'So?' asks Al-Fakik. 'What do you want me to do about it?'

You didn't expect such rudeness from the fellow. If you ask him for a story, turn to **301**. If you tell him his brother sent you, turn to **112**. Otherwise, if you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **205**. If you haven't, mark a cross on it and turn to **241**.

84

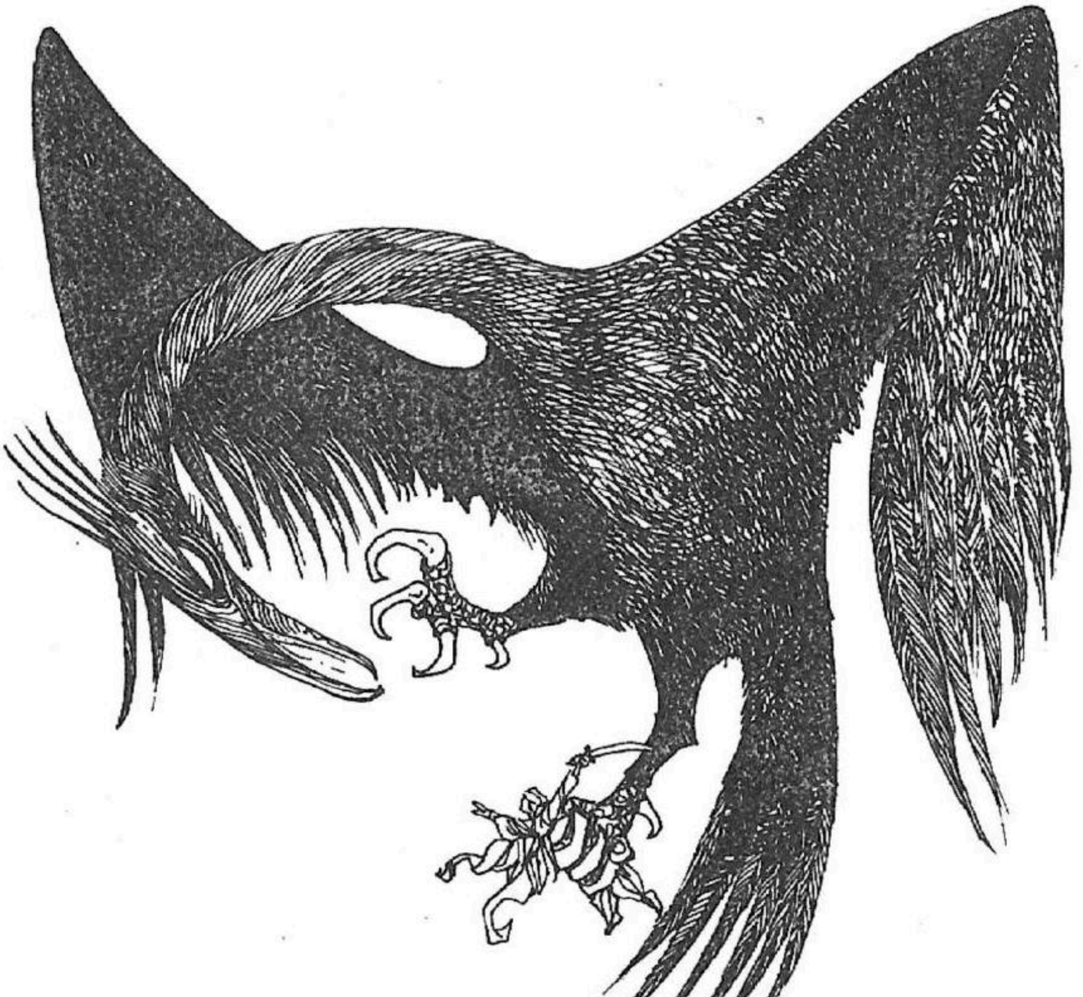
Although you are used to the hard life, you have reckoned without the frailties of the body you now inhabit. As you lie down on the parched earth you become aware that every muscle in your body is aching, and the sickening pain of the bullet wound in your stomach fills you with nausea. Reinhardt, in his own body, has been complaining steadily for the last few hours; you had ceased bothering to listen to his moaning. Now you wish you had. You lie in agony on the cruel ground, staring up at unfamiliar stars. You have pushed the frail shell you inhabit beyond its limits. Your life starts to ebb away . . . the stars slowly dim . . . for ever.

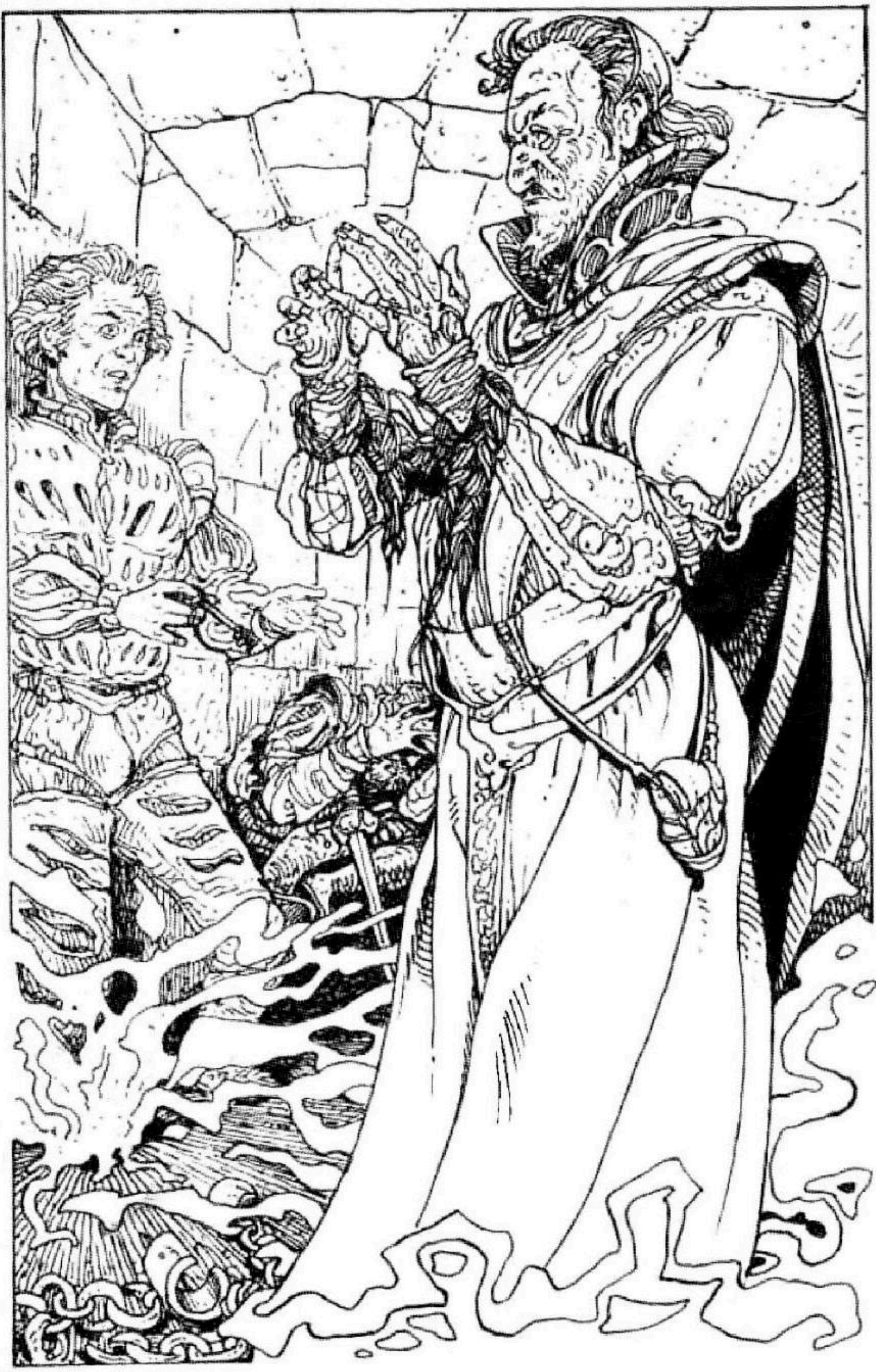
85

Your rope may be useful for binding mages, but it's not an effective weapon. As you close to loop it round his arms, your enemy laughs in your face. 'I cursed you to the end of eternity,' he says. 'Now prepare to meet it!' A gout of flame leaps from his hands, striking you before you can react. You retain consciousness for too many seconds.

86

Unslinging the rope from your belt, you loop it round him and pull tight before he can think to resist. 'Please spare me,' he pleads. 'I have nothing worth stealing.' You tighten the rope, and he squeals in pain. It seems that the rope not only binds him, it can hurt him too. Turn to **299**.





87

You rush along the cold stone corridor, dodging falling stones. The vibrations intensify as you run and a crack appears in the floor in front of you. You teeter on the brink, then leap across. Half jumping, half falling, you descend the stairs to the dungeons. A wisp of green smoke is seeping from the furthest cell, and you can hear a voice, raised in some occult incantation. The ground shakes beneath your feet, but you sprint to the cell door and crane your head to see within. Mencius stands with arms raised, his shackles lying at his feet, and the rope of human hair dangling uselessly from his arms. Reinhardt stands, staring, to one side; he is transfixed, with the key to the shackles still in his hand. A guard cowers in the corner of the cell; green smoke is seeping from the ground. Mencius starts to spin and, with a deafening crack, the ground splits open. The spinning sorcerer, and the transfixed Reinhardt, move slowly toward the yawning abyss. If you prepare your pistol to shoot Mencius, turn to **166**. If you rush him, to try to disrupt his spell, turn to **290**.

88

With a final blast of energy Mencius demolishes his opponent, but he is clearly weakened by the effort – his first thought is of escape. When he finds himself boxed in by the power of the circle of mirrors, he raises his arms and lets out a shriek. If you have a pistol and a silver bullet, turn to **268**. Otherwise, turn to **186**.

89

By sign language, you make it plain that you are hungry. Your new friend quickly summons an attendant, and within a few minutes a large bowl of food is sitting before you. At least, you assume it's food, for the brownish gloop and white stuff are like nothing you've seen before. You taste the gloop, and almost choke – it's so peppery! You are hungry, however, so you shovel it down, mixing it with the bland white stuff to reduce the spiciness. Recover 4 points of STAMINA (this will not restore STAMINA lost by travelling through Mencius's magic portal). Now do you want to learn some of the language (turn to **55**), do some shopping (turn to **248**) or visit a healer to deal with a bullet wound (turn to **2**)?

90

The sand is firm and springy beneath your feet, providing the ideal walking surface. You pass by the strange sand dune, wondering how it comes to be so close to the breaking waves. You discover soon enough. The hillock shakes, and an enormous crab emerges and scuttles towards you. You may turn and flee; turn to **340**. Otherwise, you stand and fight.

GIANT CRAB	SKILL 9	STAMINA 10

If you defeat the crab, turn to **10**.

91

You have lost your chance. Mencius completes his spell. No devastating magical blast leaps from his hands to strike you down; instead, he starts to grow. Then, as you look around, you realize that actually it is you who are shrinking. At the same time, hair starts to sprout all over your body. A tail grows from the base of your spine. Within seconds the transformation is complete. Mencius laughs and picks you up. 'My pet rat,' he laughs. 'Somehow it seems such an apt fate . . .'

92

You remove the rope from the mage carefully, ready for action in case he tries something. He seems equally cautious and, when he does move, it is very slowly. He mimes to you very clearly, pointing to the fallen book and then to his tongue, gesturing as if speaking. He does this several times, then spreads his arms and smiles. If you leave him where he is and make your way out of the cave, turn to **253**. If you allow him to retrieve the book and begin his spell once again, turn to **398**.

93

The journey lasts but a few minutes. Thanks to the carpet beneath you and the clouds which surround you, you see nothing of the country over which you are travelling. Finally you spiral downwards, landing gently on a flat roof in a large city.

'I covered our approach with a charm of invisibility, but if I remain here for any length of time Mencius may detect me and flee,' says Khasim. 'So I will wish you the luck of Hazah, and depart.' So saying, he floats up into the air once more. The carpet dwindles in the distance at an unbelievable speed. You rest a moment to steady your legs, then descend by some stone steps to the busy street. Turn to **100**.

94

Somehow you manage to claw your way down the mountain face, pausing to rest at a convenient ledge. As you catch your breath, a ship heaves into sight round the mountain. You blink. A ship? Sure enough, a wooden two-master is drifting through the air towards you, coming gently to a halt opposite your ledge. A short figure dressed in brightly coloured garb, its face shrouded by a large cowl, hops to the rail and slides a plank out towards you. If you walk along the plank, turn to **201**. If you don't, *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **164**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **328**.

95

'As you hack the evil bird out of the air, its oily black feathers cascade down round you. You just place your foot on the first step leading to the door of the Omnipresent Tower when a voice from behind calls you back. It is Hanif Al-din Hasan, the loyal vizier of the Caliph of Khorasan. His clothing is torn and dirty, and his dust-begrimed face bears a partly healed wound.

'"In the name of Hazah, before you enter the tower, assist me," he pleads. "I have fled from Khorasan, where an evil sorcerer has replaced me with a sorcerous creature that resembles me exactly. If you will aid me, I can return to the palace, slay the impostor and set matters aright."'

You may not have another chance to enter the tower. Instead, you should offer the vizier something to help him. Check your *Adventure Sheet*. Provided you have it, you may give him any one of the following items: Holy Symbol, Book of Craft, ruby ring, wizard's pouch, gold hex, vizier's robe, magic amulet, pistol and bullets, serrated knife or a sword. Cross off the item you give him, then turn to **382**.

96

Reinhardt is little help to you, but you manage to collect some tinder and sticks and make a fire. As the flames rise, you watch carefully to see which way they point. It's hard to tell exactly, but they seem to be pointing along the mountainside, upstream. If you follow the direction indicated, turn to **350**. If you climb up the mountainside to get a better view, turn to **388**.

97

After a while, Kurt leads you to a jumbled pile of rocks. In the middle, he drags you towards a large stone. Under it you find a hidden opening. Turn to **281**.

98

You climb the stairs tentatively and knock loudly on the brass-studded door, which promptly swings open. Entering, you find yourself in a great hall decorated with furniture of great cost; there is no sign of anyone. Turning, you see yourself reflected in a mirror. Then something strange about the reflection makes you pause. You quickly raise your right arm. The reflection doesn't! Instead, it throws back its head, laughs, then starts chanting and gesturing. Turn to **305**.

99

How will you attack the wizard? (You should choose an option only if you have the appropriate item.) Do you:

Strike him with a rapier?	Turn to **237**
Shoot him with a pistol?	Turn to **330**
Strike him with a broadsword?	Turn to **7**
Bind him with rope of human hair?	Turn to **391**

If you choose not to attack the wizard after all, turn to **262**.

100

The city comprises a dazzling variety of buildings, most of which are unlike any you've seen before. The people show a similar variety: although hair and skin tend to be dark coloured, there are people here of all heights and sizes, rich and poor, gentle and fierce-looking. There are even some strange creatures who don't seem to be human at all. All this variety doesn't make your task any easier. If you have a ruby ring, turn to **57**. If you haven't but you do have a scar (Sneeka or Shauca) or the word 'abandoned' written down, turn to **199**. Otherwise, turn to **241**.

101

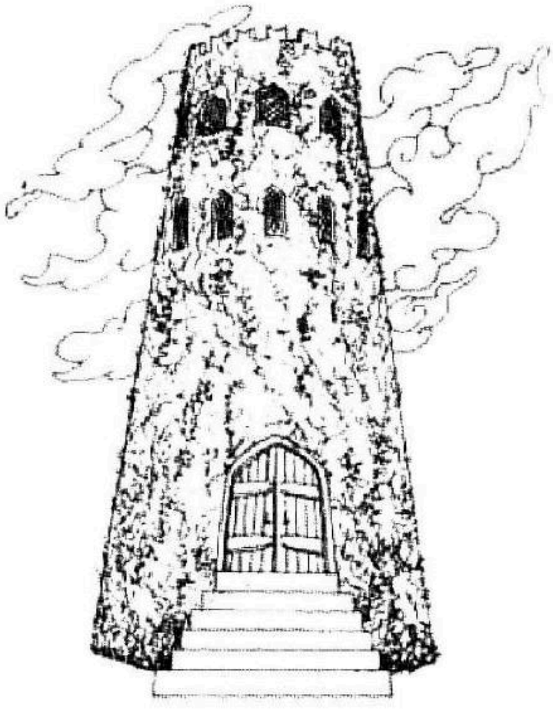
All feeling disappears, first from your limbs, then from your body. Is this death? A memory is nagging at you, but you cannot place it . . . until light bursts upon your eyes – torchlight. You are in a cell. A crack sunders the floor. Reinhardt is standing on one side. Somehow you have returned to the Margrave's castle. Reinhardt is delighted to be back home, and in his own body, but for you the homecoming is far from joyful. You have defeated Mencius, true, but at a terrible cost to yourself. For the rest of your life you must wear the prematurely aged body of your hated enemy. Was the sacrifice worth it? Reinhardt rewards you amply, but somehow you can't help feeling that you missed too many chances. With your body and your confidence shattered, your magehunting days are over. An early retirement is all that the future has in store for you.

102

You dispatch the thief quickly and quietly. Casting your eyes round the room he led you into, you spot a fine crystal goblet with inlaid gems. If you take it, note it down on your *Adventure Sheet*. As you leave the room, a man leading a donkey stares at you curiously. Ignoring him, you hurry off into town. Your attempt to follow Reinhardt clearly requires more ability at communication than you have at present: you must learn a little of the local language. Turn to **189** if you have already been to the tavern or to **293** if you haven't.

103

Using a stout stick which you find near by, you start to scrape the Holy Symbol into the dry earth of the hillside. For this method to work correctly, you must be perfectly composed. Once the symbol is complete, you choose a suitable stone, offer up a prayer, and toss the stone into the circle. It bounces once, rebounding in an unexpected direction. Tracing a line from the centre of the symbol through the stone, you work out the direction you will have to travel, by aiming for a distinctive cluster of rocks high on the mountainside. Hoping that Mencius isn't too far away, you set off. Walking in this heat is tiring work, particularly with you in such a weakened state. You make good time, however. Beyond the rocky outcrop you come upon a mountain path which seems to lead in the right direction. Turn to **52**.



104

'Let him go free!' a familiar voice calls. Reinhardt is standing a little way down the tunnel. 'He rescued me when you abandoned me to the Shauca,' he says petulantly. You look at the mage again, then loosen the rope a little. Very slowly, he reaches out to touch the Shauca Scar, recites a little chant, and the scar disappears (erase it from your *Adventure Sheet*). Is this a trick? He points to the fallen book. If you let him pick it up and continue his spell, turn to **398**. If you tighten the rope and strangle him to death, turn to **236**.

105

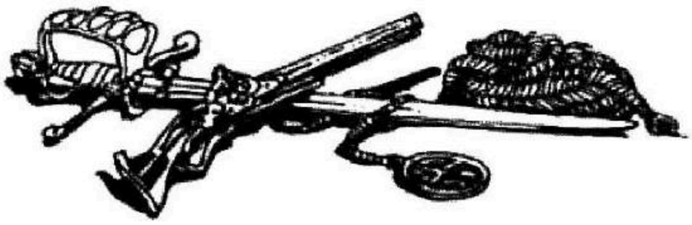
Now you have a dog (note it down on your *Adventure Sheet*) but, since it hasn't been fed on goat's meat, it won't be much help in tracking Mencius. If you try to make enquiries in the town, turn to **318**. Otherwise, you will have to ascertain the mage's direction by drawing a Holy Symbol (turn to **78**).

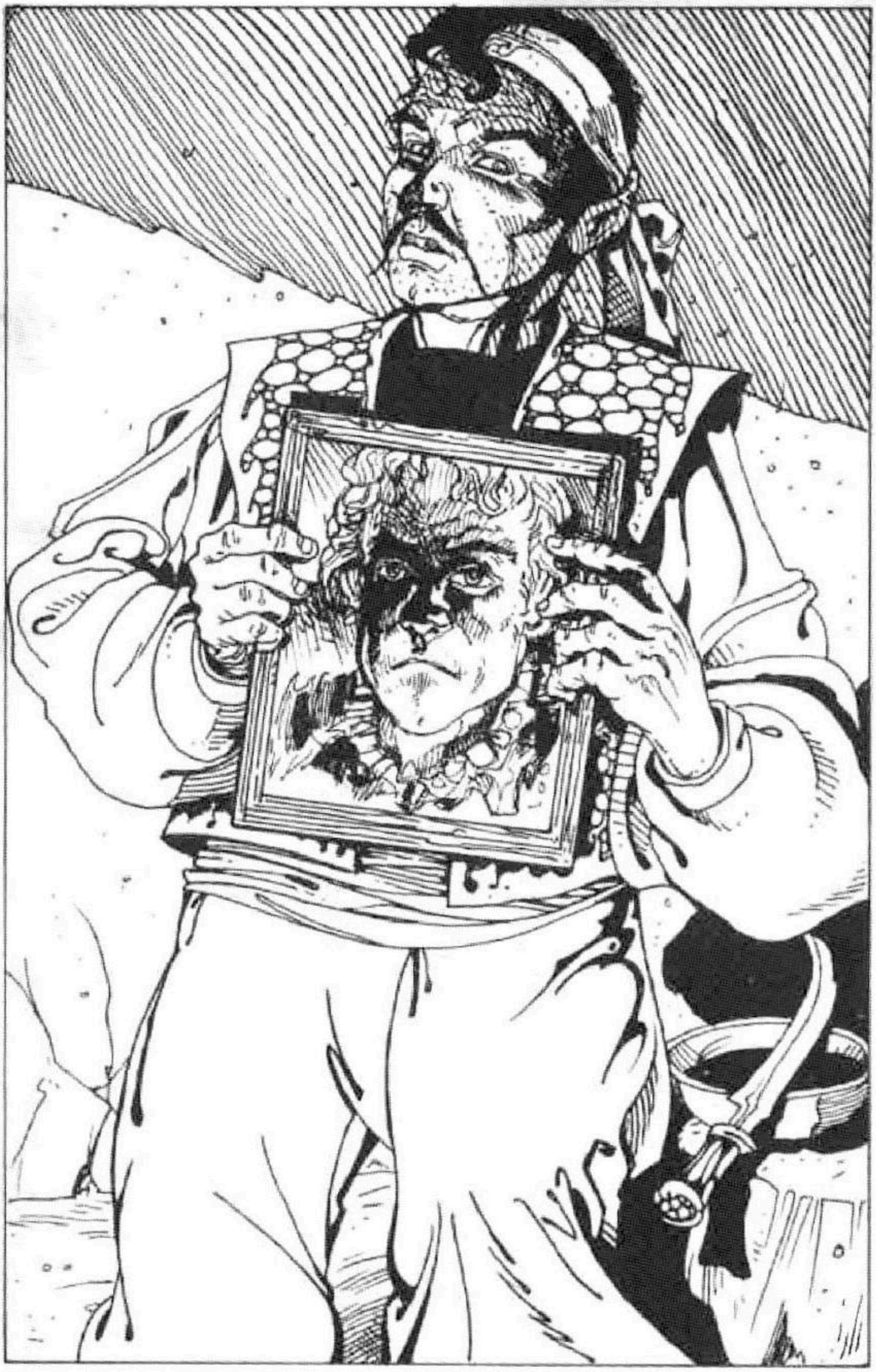
106

In order to obtain enough goat meat to feed your dog, you will have to pay 2 Gold Pieces; if you don't already have somewhere to stay, you will have to pay another 2 Gold Pieces for food and lodging for yourself. If you can't or won't pay, turn back to **267**. If you buy the goat meat, cross 2 Gold Pieces off your *Adventure Sheet*. Then, if you have somewhere to stay, turn to the appropriate paragraph. If you haven't, cross off another 2 Gold Pieces and decide whether you will lie low while feeding the dog (turn to **170**) or continue to search the city (turn to **261**).

107

There's something very unusual about Mencius: not only is his hair streaked with grey, but also his skin has aged. Apart from the wound in his head, blood is also flowing from the bullet-wound in his belly. Although the silver bullet pierced his skin, you know that his sorcerous power must have drawn the edges of the wound together. It seems that Mencius has no power left, for how else could the wound have reopened? You untie the rope of human hair, keeping it handy in case the mage shows any signs of regaining his magic. Now, what to do about the wound? If you stanch it, turn to **379**. If you remove the silver bullet first, turn to **219**.





108

You find yourself staring at ... Reinhardt! For a moment you think the fellow must have some kind of portrait, but then you realize: it's a mirror. Somehow you are occupying Reinhardt's body. But if you are in Reinhardt's body, the corpse you left back at the river must have been ... Reinhardt. And its former occupant, the evil wizard Mencius, is now roaming the land in your likeness! The pieces fall into place – the strange clothes you are wearing, the transformation of your broadsword into a delicate rapier. Once more you search through your pockets, confirming what you already know to be true: you have Reinhardt's possessions. Your magehunting gear is now in the possession of the very person it's designed to capture! The young fellow has waited patiently while you checked your belongings, but now you have a very different task – you must hunt down a truly deadly mage. You convey to him that you no longer need his help. He ushers you out of the room and into the busy street.

Shortly after you wave goodbye to him, you discover that he has picked your pockets. Maybe you shouldn't have revealed their contents in front of him. He has taken all your money, your jewellery and your ruby ring (erase them from your *Adventure Sheet*). If you want to try to find the thief and reclaim your property, turn to **41**. If you prefer to start looking for Mencius straight away, turn to **198**. If you want to try to get more used to this strange land you're in, turn to **293** if you haven't yet been to the tavern, and to **189** if you have.

109

'Get me out of here!' Reinhardt hisses urgently. 'The guards along the tunnel have a key.' Even though you hate the ungrateful wretch, his father treated you with nobility so, in memory of Mechtner, you charge back along the tunnel, surprising the two guards you passed earlier.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First DWELLER IN DARKNESS	8	6
Second DWELLER IN DARKNESS	7	6

Fight them one at a time. Because of the poor light, you must fight with your Attack Strength reduced by 1 point. If you defeat the guards, turn to **17**.

110

Further down the river, you join up with a path – obviously well frequented. A few minutes later, you reach a town. At least, you assume it's a town. Where you come from, towns don't have walls round them, or towers with tops shaped like onions. The path leads to a gate in the wall, guarded by swarthy fellows bearing wickedly curved swords. They look human – just – which reassures you a little. If you try to enter the town, turn to **40**. If you pass by, turn to **231**.

111

Cross off the bullet (or diamond) you fired from your *Adventure Sheet*. Your marksmanship doesn't fail you:

you hit the enemy full in the chest. The figure lets out a scream of shock as it is flung over the side of the ship, continuing to wail as it falls down, down, to break on the rocks below. The ship now starts to shake and, with gathering speed, rockets towards a rock face, on which it smashes into splinters. Note down the number '333' on your *Adventure Sheet*. Next time you *Test your Luck*, make a note of the paragraph you are at, then turn to paragraph **333**. Now turn to paragraph **365**.

112

At mention of his brother, Al-Fakik hops backwards and looks you up and down through bloodshot eyes. His manner changes abruptly to one of fawning solicitude. 'Yes, yes, yes, of course I'll help you! New to this land? Don't worry, I'll sort things out for you.' He bustles you out of his hut and points towards a large building. 'Look for the large man with a monkey on his shoulder: his name is Saleem. Mention Harun al-Harun to him. May Hazah bless your way.' So saying, he scurries back into his hut. If you go in search of Saleem, turn to **394**. Otherwise, if you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **205**. If you haven't, mark a cross on it and turn to **241**.

113

Green smoke seeps from the ground. You start to spin, but somehow your eyes remain focused on the ground at your feet. The stone splits open; a crack yawns in front of you. You move towards it and fall headlong into darkness. As you tumble endlessly through the nothingness of other dimensions, you have plenty of time to reflect on the foolishness of untrained attempts at the Evil Arts. Your magehunting career ends here.

114

Drawing closer to the cliffs, you spy a narrow path leading up and over them. Following this brings you to a fishing village. The village folk greet you a little warily as you enter, but then they offer you food and drink (recover 2 points of STAMINA). Your enquiries are met with blank stares, but they eventually put you on a fishing boat. The fisherman, a bluff seaman cut from the same cloth as many you have met in your previous adventures, amuses you by teaching you knots (most of which you already know). After a short journey, the boat arrives at the large city of Kallamehr. Bidding the friendly fisherman goodbye, you make your way into its mazy streets. Turn to **100**.

115

'With a mighty blow you leap at the lion and strike its head from its body. But a cackle comes from near by. You turn your head, and black wings blot out the sun . . .' Turn to **151**.

116

Your next problem is to feed the dog for a week on goat's meat. Luckily, the animal sellers here sell live goats, so you can be sure of getting the right animal. Unfortunately, a goat costs 3 Gold Pieces. You will also need 2 Gold Pieces to live on for that week and, as you have already discovered, prices in this land are exorbitant. The goat seller will accept jewellery or a crystal goblet, if you have either, in lieu of the 3 Gold Pieces. If you buy the goat using money or jewellery, cross the payment off your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **193**. If you buy the goat using a crystal goblet, cross it off your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **272**. If you don't buy the goat, turn to **105**.

117

You can help yourself to food from the inn's kitchens (make a note of up to 4 Provisions on your *Adventure Sheet*, if you do this). Leaving the inn, you proceed along a path up the mountainside, finally heading over a mountain pass. From here you make your way down. Turn to **365**.

118

Making your way to the top of a hill to spy out the land, you observe the coast, some distance away, and by it the unmistakable signs of a city. You are just preparing to descend when a sudden gust of wind almost knocks you off your feet. Then the sun is blotted out, and you hear a tremendous sound, like the flapping of the canvas sails of a hundred and one ships. Descending upon you is an enormous bird of prey, its talons outstretched.

BIRD of PRODIGIOUS SIZE SKILL 7 STAMINA 15

If the bird wins two attacks in succession, make sure that you have noted its current STAMINA in the Encounter box, then turn to **352**. If you defeat the enormous creature, turn to **27**.

119

It doesn't take you long to find a storyteller. On a street corner a dishevelled old man dressed in patchwork clothes is addressing a motley crowd of street urchins, poor traders and drunks. His story goes something like this:

'One day Burah-Bashar went to a feast. He was wearing his everyday clothes and, when he went in, nobody spoke to him and nobody offered him a seat. So Burah-Bashar went home and put on his best clothes, then returned to the feast. The host welcomed him warmly, showed him to a good seat and offered him the best dishes.

'Burah-Bashar put his coat among the food and said, "Eat, Coat!" The other guests were amazed and asked him what on earth he thought he was doing. He replied: "When I came in my old clothes, nobody looked at me or offered me anything. But when I came back in these clothes, you gave me fine food and drink. So these things were for my clothes, not for me!"'

There is a faint ripple of amusement from the crowd. If you want to question the storyteller, you will have to drop some money in his bowl. Cross off the amount you give to the storyteller, then turn to **370**. Otherwise, if you have the word 'trail' written down, turn to **205**; if not, mark a cross and turn to **241**.

120

The bird gets a good grip on you once more and descends to the pinnacle of a mountain crag, where it has constructed a huge nest. Inside the nest, the bird's young await their feed: you! The bird releases you and you seize your chance; you must fight all the birds.

	SKILL	STAMINA
BIRD of PRODIGIOUS SIZE	7	(current)
First YOUNG BIRD	4	7
Second YOUNG BIRD	4	6
Third YOUNG BIRD	5	8

Fight the birds one at a time. If you defeat all the birds, turn to **11**.

121

You have no idea what the woman is saying, so you shake your head in mute incomprehension. There is silence while the woman stares at you. Then she clicks her fingers. Turn to **197**.

122

'Sure enough, the prince released the man from his chains and helped him escape. The prince's kindness was repaid, however, with treachery. Conjuring the dark spirits which served him, the ungrateful sorcerer transformed the prince into a mountain lion, then disappeared to distant parts. The prince desperately tried to find someone who would help him, but of course everyone ran away whenever he approached. So he wandered the land, finally reaching a mighty desert. Far away in the distance, across the shifting sands, he thought he could see a tower. He remembered tales which spoke of a wizard who dwelt in a tower, so he set his nose in that direction and started to walk. He had not gone far when a crack appeared in the ground in front of him. From it emerged a mighty Efreet, one of the Genie of the Marid. The prince quaked in fear.

'"You have crossed my path, so I must kill you," said the frightful Efreet. "But before I do, I will tell you a tale of my brother, so that you may understand my actions."' Turn to **371**.

123

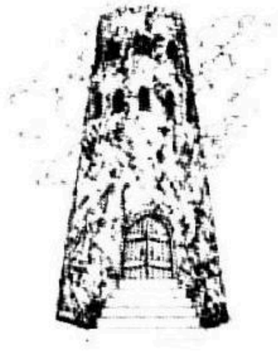
You put some distance between you and the cave, running back the way you came. When you reach the river, you are desperately thirsty, so you slide down the bank. Unfortunately, you are so tired that you can't prevent yourself plunging into the fast-flowing stream. You are carried some way down-river before your flailing strokes bring you close enough to the bank to haul yourself out of the water. You rest for a while before continuing in search of your most important need: some food! Turn to **245**.

124

With a look of desperation in his eyes, Mencius takes to the air, flapping his arms frantically. You are reminded of the way he looked the first time you captured him, though the circumstances now are rather different. Again he casts about, trying to escape, but he cannot penetrate the circle of mirrors so quickly. Like a bird of prey, he settles on one of the rafters. 'I still have enough power to blast you, you hell-cursed worm.' So saying, he raises his arms once again. His shriek, like the wailing of a thousand damned souls, makes your scalp prickle. This will be his most powerful blast yet, and your amulet has no more power. Turn to **186**.

125

'Oh, it's you!' comes a familiar voice. You turn and see Reinhardt, standing further along the tunnel. 'Khasim rescued me from the Shauca after you abandoned me, a typical . . .' his voice trails off. 'Khasim!' he exclaims. He is staring at the dead wizard. Turn to **236**.



126

With much sign language and the limited expressions at your disposal, you manage to convey that you are trying to find a sorcerer. You strike lucky quite quickly – a white-bearded old man nods emphatically. You learn that the man you seek is outside town, and the white-beard offers to guide you there. On the journey you try to make conversation with the old man, but you constantly come up against the barrier of language. After walking into the hills for a couple of hours, you arrive at a sheltered valley. The white-beard calls out, 'Khasim,' and says something to you that you can't quite understand – except that it includes the word 'sorcerer'. From a cave opening comes another old man, this one wearing the same strange cloth hat you had noticed on several of the townsfolk. After a short conversation with him, your guide bids you farewell and turns to make his way out of the valley. You turn in bemusement to the hat-wearing cave-dweller. Turn to **308**.

127

You thank the wizard, and he offers you something: it's a five-sided gold coin, covered with illegible symbols. It may be useful, so you put it in your pocket (note down 'gold hex' on your *Adventure Sheet*), and make your way out of the tunnel. The wizard indicated that the city of Kallamehr lies to the south-west. Turn to **27**.

128

You check the river, then scan the mountainside above you, but you can see nothing. However, the strange feeling makes you nervous, so you pull Reinhardt to his feet and set off again. Turn to **245**.

129

A sword is useless against a mage unless it has first been wetted with his blood. Your wild swing barely unbalances your enemy. 'I cursed you to the end of eternity,' he says. 'Now prepare to meet it!' A questing gout of flame leaps from his hands, striking you before you can react. You remain conscious for too many seconds.

130

Do you understand 'kal' or 'basic kal'? If you do, turn to **6**. If you do not, you can try to learn something about the town (turn to **293**, unless you have already been to the tavern; in this case, turn to **189**) or you can avoid wasting time and try to communicate using gestures (turn to **232**).

131

Mencius is concentrating so hard on his spell that he doesn't realize what you are doing. No sooner has the magical bolt left his hands than the dizzying sensation of body switch hits you. In the next split second you have time to notice the look of absolute helplessness in Mencius's eyes as he realizes that he has no time to reverse the switch. The spell erupts in a cascade of scintillating colours and Mencius's body is blown into a thousand and one pieces. Then the scene before you is swallowed up in blackness, absolute blackness. Check your *Adventure Sheet*. If you have a shackles key or the word 'lost' written down, turn to **260**. If you haven't, and the box marked 'Switch' is ticked, turn to **400**; otherwise, turn to **309**.

132

You scoop out a shallow grave, drag the corpse into it and pile earth and stones on top. After all this exertion you are panting, so you rest in the shade. You certainly feel different – far more tired than you would expect. You drift off to sleep . . . and awaken as the sun is sinking, casting long shadows over the hills. Before the light is gone, you check your possessions. To your surprise, there is no sign of your pistol or mirrors (cross them off your *Adventure Sheet*). Turn to **75**.

133

'Put me back in my own body!' he demands. 'I'm sick of being in this old man's shell, and my stomach hurts all the time.'

'You have my sympathy,' Khasim replies, 'and I will attend to your injuries straight away. However, the body switch is beyond my power to reverse. I suspect that it is inherently unstable, so an opportunity should arise in good time.'

Reinhardt lets out an exasperated 'Huh!' and looks away. Khasim takes a tiny jar of powder out of a small pouch, recites a short chant, and places his hand on Reinhardt's stomach. Reinhardt drifts off to sleep. In the Companion box of your *Adventure Sheet*, erase any current entries for STAMINA and SKILL, and enter the values SKILL 6, STAMINA 12. If you have a Shauca Scar, erase it. Turn to **61**.

134

Mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet*. After the show, you follow the magician, taking care that he can't see you. He makes his way to a tent on the far side of the tent district. You check as many footprints as you can see clearly, but none are those of a cat. You wait for a short time after he enters his tent, then peer in carefully. The magician seems to be eating a light meal. If Kurt is with you, turn to **177**. Otherwise, you can prepare to ambush him (turn to **59**) or you can give up and try something else (turn to **241**).

135

With your lungs bursting, you run, desperately looking around to see if the Shambler is following you. Luckily its huge legs are not built for speed, so you outdistance it. If you have the shackles key or a Sneeka Scar, turn to **377**. Otherwise, turn to **274**.

136

Further enquiries reveal no one else that sounds like Mencius. Mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet*. If you decide to head for the bazaar, turn to **364**. Otherwise, turn to **241**.

137

The fellow takes a step backwards, pausing for breath. If you finish him off, turn to **226**. If you spare him, turn to **360**.

138

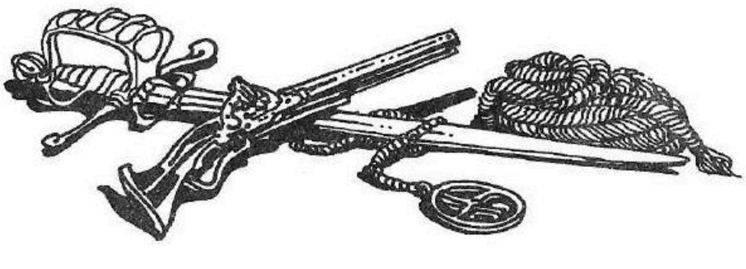
Climbing the steps behind you are Reinhardt and an old man in a cloth hat. But you have no time for happy reunions. You become aware of a presence in the great hall; a figure has just descended the staircase in the opposite wall. It's you! Or, rather, it is Mencius in your body. He starts slightly as he sees you.

'Ha! Come to reclaim your flesh?' he taunts. 'Over your dead body!' So saying, he begins weaving a sorcerous spell.

You prepare to attack, but the old man pushes past you. 'Flee!' he cries. 'His strength is greater than ever. I will hold him off.' So saying, he starts to chant and gesture. Seconds later, an explosion of magical force erupts as the two wizards cast spells of fearful destructive power at each other. If you stay to help, turn to **42**. If you flee, cross the Gold Hex off your *Adventure Sheet* if you had it, then turn to **376**.

139

You set off up the mountain, cursing the relentless sun. After barely half an hour, Reinhardt is complaining of tiredness. Since he *is* badly injured, and is stuck in the prematurely aged body of the sorcerer, you relent and find a little shade in which to rest. As you lie there, you feel a strange dizziness, and your scalp prickles. *Test your Luck*. If you are Lucky, turn to **152**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **271**.



140

The creature's body splashes, lifeless, into the river and is carried away by the current. You rest briefly, then set off again. By now, long shadows are streaking the land. After another hour of walking it has grown too dark to continue. You find a sheltered spot, build a fire to keep you warm, and pass a restless, hungry night, hoping that no more evil creatures are waiting in the dark to ambush you. Lose 1 point from your STAMINA. Next morning you face a choice: you may continue in the same direction (turn to **4**) or retrace your steps (turn to **369**).

141

Ramming the diamond down the barrel, you aim carefully and squeeze the trigger. The charge hits Mencius full in the forehead. He stares back at you in utter astonishment, then his body crumples. As you watch in revulsion, it starts to decompose, shrinking rapidly and giving off a malodorous green gas. Finally the gas coalesces round the diamond, seeming to disappear into it. All that is left is the gem. Cautiously picking it up, you peer into its sparkling depths. Is that tortured figure within really the essence of Mencius? While you are staring into the diamond, the scene before you is swallowed by absolute blackness. If you have the shackles key or the word 'lost' written down, turn to **260**; otherwise, turn to **101**.

142

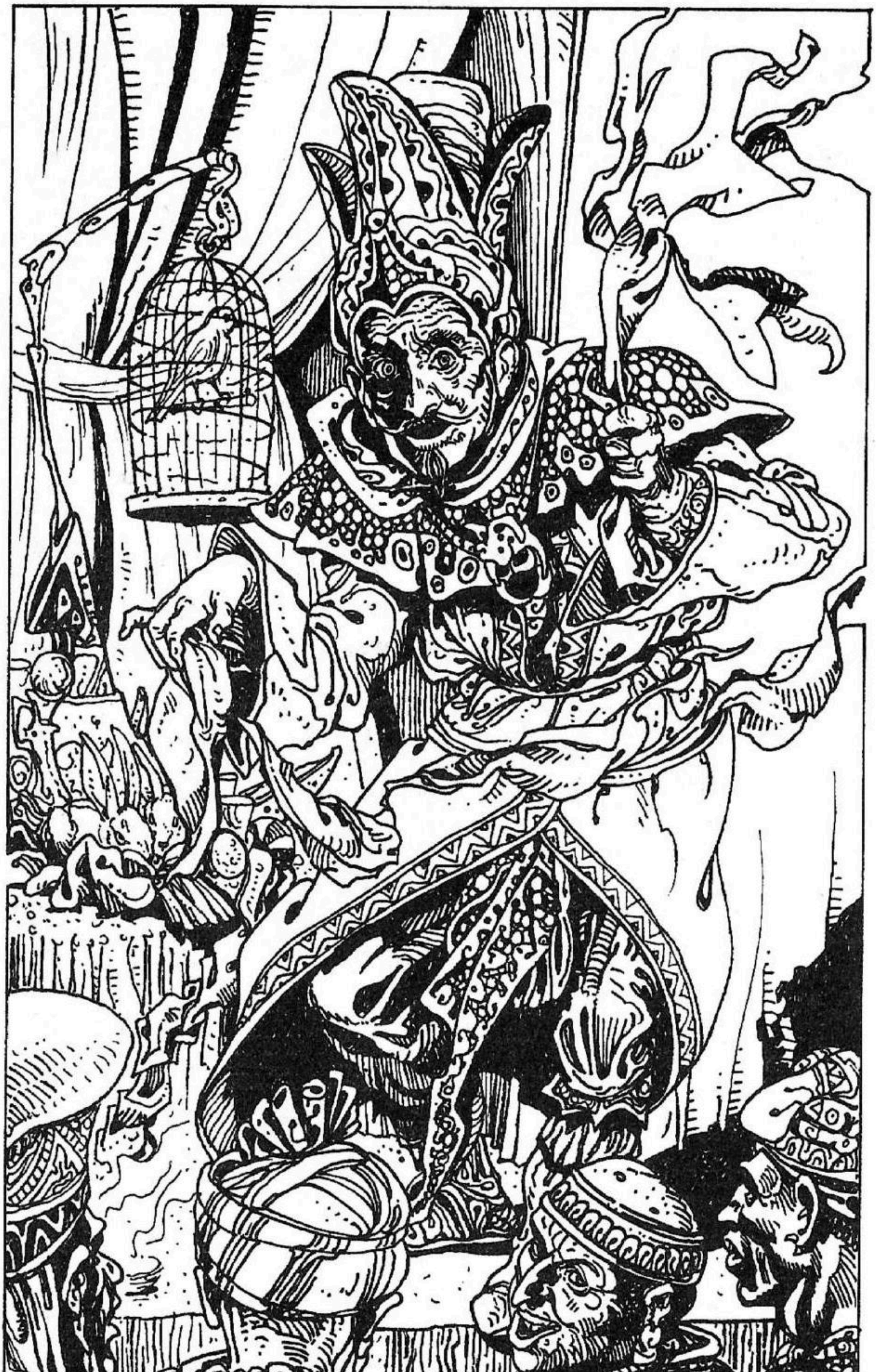
Next morning, you are almost surprised to awaken unharmed. You look around for the tracks made by last night's attackers, and are pleased to discover that they are clearly visible. You follow them for a short distance to a jumbled pile of rocks. The tracks lead out from under a heavy stone. Peering under it, you discover an opening. If it hadn't been for your skill in tracking, you would have missed it. Turn to **281**.

143

By now you are unbelievably tired. On the way back, you keep your eyes peeled and manage to spot another hairy Shambler while still some distance away. Turn to **377**.

144

It seems pleased by your gesture and adopts a less threatening stance. However, it keeps its exquisite eyes locked on you as you edge round it and make your way out of the ruins. Turn to **264**.



145

Your language ability is rather limited but you reason that, since most of the people here are dark of hair and skin, a foreigner such as yourself would stand out. You enquire about people who resemble you, soon learning about a newcomer to the city. You can't follow the complex explanation that accompanies this information, but a kind woman guides you through the streets and points you towards a ramshackle district which seems to be made entirely of tents. You slip in among the tents, with a wariness honed by the possibility that you are getting near Mencius. A crowd is assembling in a large, open space in the middle of the encampment, watching some kind of entertainment. You draw closer and peer over the heads of the onlookers at a crude stage. With a gasp, you realize that you are watching a magic show: a performer in heavy make-up is producing a string of silk scarves from every part of his body and flinging them on to a table already laden with rabbits, fruit, cups, balls and even a little yellow bird in a cage. Though the make-up is thick, the build, hair-colour and facial shape all match. Surely this is Mencius! If you wait in ambush and attack the magician when he finishes his show, turn to **343**. However, if you prefer to follow him discreetly, turn to **134**.

146

You scoop out a shallow grave, drag the corpse into it and pile earth and stones on top. Then you turn your attention to finding Reinhardt. Turn to **336**.

147

Al-Bakbuk is overjoyed to receive the jewellery and precious things from you. He hugs you warmly, kissing you on both cheeks, then hurries off to present you with a parting gift, which turns out to be an intricately embroidered robe. 'This trivial item may assist you,' says Al-Bakbuk, 'as it is the robe of a retired Vizier of the Caliph's court. People will treat you with respect while you are wearing this robe.' Although you have little idea what a 'vizier' or a 'caliph' may be, you accept the gift gracefully (note down the 'vizier's robe' on your *Adventure Sheet*). Al-Bakbuk also advises you, when you reach Kallamehr, to seek out his brother, the storyteller Al-Haddar. You summon the Genie and, with a flash, you appear in the streets of Kallamehr. Note down the word 'early' on your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **100**.

148

A huge attendant closes in from either side and grabs you by the arm. If you offer no resistance, turn to **279**. Otherwise, you must fight the courtiers.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First COURTIER	6	8
Second COURTIER	5	7

Fight both the courtiers at the same time. Each will make a separate attack against you in each Attack Round, but you must choose which one you will attack. Fight against your chosen target as normal. Against the other opponent, roll for Attack Strengths as normal, but you may not wound him: you are simply attempting to parry his strike. If you defeat the courtiers, turn to **23**.

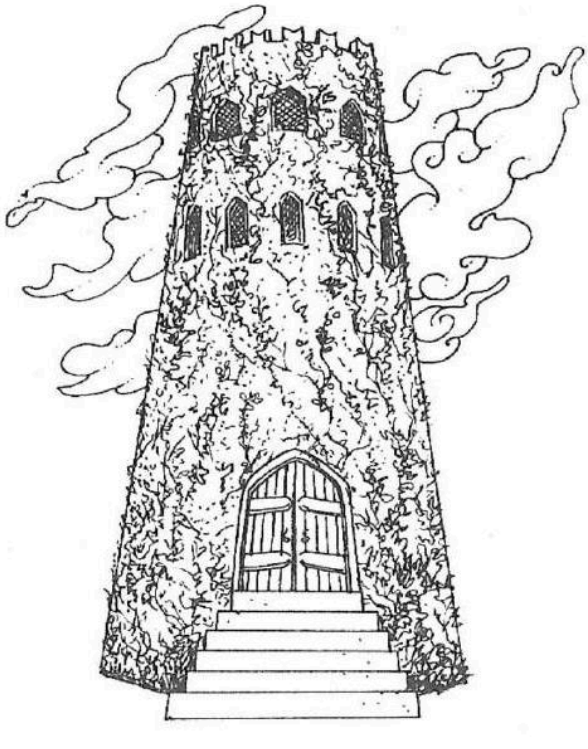
149

There is the strangest sensation of falling upwards as you keep on staring deep into Reinhardt's eyes. Your quick wits realize what is happening – the spell which switched your bodies *is* reversible! You now know how to switch bodies. Whenever your scalp prickles, you can change bodies with Reinhardt or Mencius. You will not be given this as an option, but you may chose to switch anyway. To switch, add together the digits of the paragraph you are at, then add the result to the paragraph you are at. For example, you are now at paragraph **149**. If you wish to switch bodies with Reinhardt, add the digits (1 + 4 + 9 = 14), add this total to the current paragraph (14 + 149 = 163) then turn to that paragraph (in this case **163**). If, on the other hand, you wish to break eye-contact with Reinhardt and prevent the transfer, turn to **310**.

150

The chase nears its end . . . your lungs are bursting . . . Mencius turns his head and sees you . . . a silver bullet from your pistol brings him crashing down . . . 'I curse you to the end of eternity . . . to the end of eternity . . . to the end of eternity . . . to the end . . .'

You wake up, to find yourself lying in a comfortable bed. Leaning over you are Reinhardt and the old man who tried to cast a spell on you earlier. Cross the scar off your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **48**.



151

You wake up, to find Al-Haddar sprinkling rose water on your face. 'I told you that my stories were all true,' he grins, 'and evidently you got rather involved in it. Perhaps tomorrow night we will take the story further; but for now it seems it must end here.' Turn to **244**.

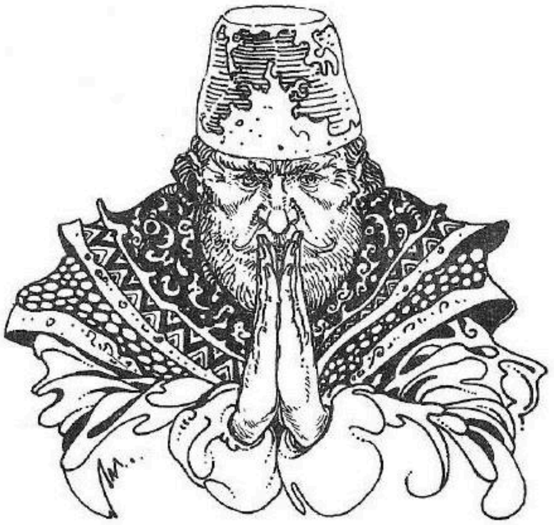
152

Glancing around, you happen to catch Reinhardt's eye. You lock stares, and the dizziness grows stronger. There is a feeling like falling through the air, and you find yourself staring into Reinhardt's eyes – but now Reinhardt is back in his own body! A sharp pain in your stomach confirms that you are now in the body of Mencius! Reinhardt is delighted to be restored to his natural state. In the box marked 'Companion' on your *Adventure Sheet*, write '5' next to SKILL and '8' next to STAMINA. Then tick the box marked 'Switch' in the bottom right-hand corner. This box shows that you have switched bodies with your companion. Unless you switch back, you will use the SKILL and STAMINA scores of your companion. Write any equipment you gain while in this body in the bottom part of the Equipment box, so that you can keep track of who has what.

You now know how to switch bodies. Whenever your scalp prickles, you can change bodies with Reinhardt or Mencius. You will not be given this as an option, but you may choose to switch anyway. To switch, simply add together the digits of the paragraph you are at, then add the result to the paragraph you are at. For example, if you were at paragraph **139**, you would add the digits (1 + 3 + 9 = 13), then add this total to the paragraph you were at (13 + 139 = 152) and then turn to paragraph **152**. Back in his own body, Reinhardt is eager to be off again. Turn to **388**.

153

You summon the Genie and obtain from him some fabulously jewelled daggers, which you lavish upon the palace functionaries. The Genie abruptly tells you that this was your last wish; then he disappears, taking the ruby ring with him (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*). Note down the word 'fame' then turn to **351**.



154

The wizard opens a large book and starts to chant. Your eyelids begin to feel like lead weights, and you drift into slumber.

You awaken to find yourself lying on a comfortable bed. With a sudden shock you realize you can now understand the local language. (Note down 'kal' on your *Adventure Sheet* – if you already have 'basic kal', erase the word 'basic'.) The wizard notices that you have woken and comes over to you.

'Do you understand now?' he asks.

'Perfectly,' you reply. Turn to **48**.

155

Unslinging the rope from your belt, you loop it round the sorcerer and pull tight before he can think to resist. The book drops from his hand and he mouths further strange sounds. You tighten the rope and he squeals in pain. It is unusual that he can be hurt so easily, but it may be a ruse. If you try to strangle him with the rope, turn to **299**. If you try to find a way to question him, turn to **71**.

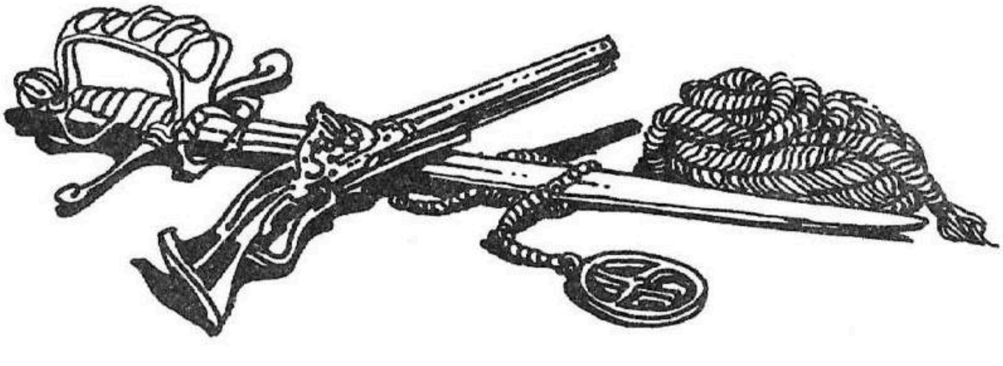
156

Reinhardt is hard pressed by the second highwayman, but so far he seems to have kept out of the way of his opponent's sword. As you finish off the first, he turns to look at you, mouthing 'Help!' despairingly. Your scalp prickles and you experience a vertiginous sensation of falling. Turn to **168**.

157

Using the stubby wings on its back, the creature rises into the air and, flapping furiously, flies off inland. Will you:

Shoot it with a pistol (if you have one)?	Turn to **30**
Make your way to the coast?	Turn to **264**
Search the ruins?	Turn to **311**



158

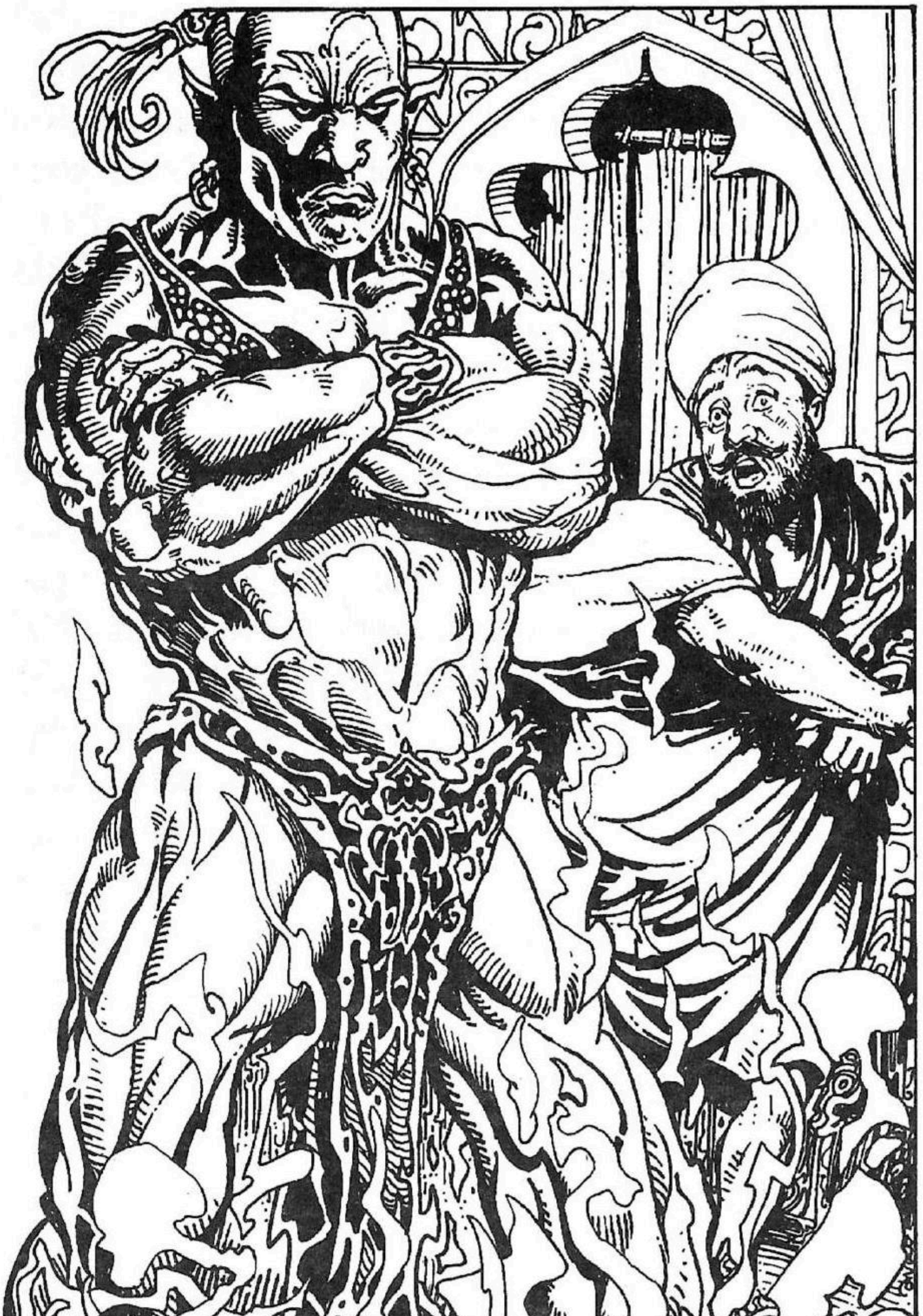
Al-Haddar decides to throw a feast in your honour, inviting several of his friends to join him. The fine food and lively conversation go on for several hours, and Al-Haddar entertains you with a continuous stream of funny stories. If you do *not* have the word 'trail', and you do have both the word 'kal' and either a vizier's robe or Al-Bakbuk's glass, turn to **397**. Otherwise, if you have the word 'trail', or if you don't have the other items, turn to **244**.

159

With Mencius dead, you can devote your attention to trying to understand the strange land to which his spell carried you. The continuing heat is hotter than the hottest summer you can remember, and you have yet to see a tree like the cool, dark pines of your homeland; these are all stumpy, twisted monstrosities. Perhaps the inhabitants of this land follow the same pattern? You soon have an opportunity for comparison. After joining a well-frequented path, you come upon a town – at least you assume it's a town. You are not accustomed to towns with walls round them, or towers of yellow clay with tops shaped like onions, for that matter! The path leads to a gate in the wall, guarded by reassuringly human soldiers. As you approach, you realize that you were half right – they are several centimetres shorter than you, with rather cruel faces and hooked noses. Their skin is tanned by the blazing sun, and their clothes are unlike any you have ever seen. You approach warily, but the guards take little notice of you. Soon you find yourself in bustling streets full of strange, dark people. You notice that most are wearing clothes of silk which would strain even the Margrave's purse. You also hear their chatter: an incomprehensible guttural gabble that makes your head ache. If you start making enquiries about Reinhardt straight away, turn to **130**. If you spend a little time getting settled in first, turn to **293**.

160

Finally three corpses lie before you. Examining them, you are shocked to discover that they are not human – their skin is as black as night, their green eyes slanting, and their ears large and pointed. You take one of the serrated knives with which they fought (note it down on your *Adventure Sheet*). Exhausted by the fight, you slump to the ground. Now, at last, you can sleep. Luckily, Reinhardt seems to be wide awake. You just hope he can keep an eye out for more trouble. Turn to **142**.



161

You take out the ruby ring. It is looking a little grubby, so you give it a polish on your sleeve. There is a flash like the discharge of a pistol, the acrid smell of sulphur, and a huge, monstrous figure is standing before you. Al-Bakbuk rushes into the room and, on seeing the enormous creature, hurls himself to the ground, wailing pitiably. The demonic thing speaks, in a voice like rolling thunder. 'Ask, and I shall obey.' Will you:

Attack the evil creature?	Turn to **65**
Ask it to take you to Reinhardt?	Turn to **342**
Ask it to teach you the language?	Turn to **387**

162

To obtain an audience, you require a vizier's robe; otherwise you will have to bribe the various functionaries at the palace. Tactful enquiries reveal that this will require either 15 Gold Pieces or any one of the following: a diamond, a piece of jewellery, a crystal goblet, a ruby ring, or a lapis lazuli brooch. If you know the secret of the ring and you still possess it, you may use that. Otherwise, if you have a vizier's robe or if you wish to make the bribe, cross the appropriate payment off your *Adventure Sheet*, then turn to **351**. If you want to choose another option altogether, turn to **241**.

163

A sharp pain in your stomach jolts you awake from your dizzy hypnosis. Reinhardt lets out a cry of triumph at being back in his own body. In the box marked 'Companion' on your *Adventure Sheet*, write '5' next to your SKILL and '8' next to STAMINA. Then tick the box marked 'Switch' in the bottom right-hand corner. This box shows you that you are now in your companion's body. Unless you switch again, you will use the SKILL and STAMINA scores of your companion. Write any equipment you gain while in this body in the bottom part of the Equipment List, so that you can keep track of who has what. Now that he has his body back, and you are stuck inside the feeble shell of Mencius, Reinhardt is keen to continue the divination. Turn to **32**.

164

The figure chuckles to himself, and performs a mock bow to you, then pulls the plank back. The ship edges closer to the ledge. If you have a ruby ring, turn to **46**. Otherwise, your only chance of escape from this dismal crag is to jump aboard the ship. Turn to **239**.

165

The creature expires with a piteous cry; though hideous, it was as much a victim as you. Saleem is beset by people collecting their winnings, so when the boat once more slides to one side you rush out. You get clear of the arena safely, and return to check out Al-Fakik's hut. It's empty – the treacherous rascal has fled. You must search elsewhere. If you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **205**. Otherwise, mark a cross there and turn to **241**.

166

You prime your pistol as quickly as you can, but the two reach the crack before you can ram the bullet home. A wild, resonant cry of triumph from Mencius splits the air, and the pair vanish into the crack. You rush to the edge and peer down. Two figures are receding into the inky blackness, then they disappear abruptly. From now on, you resolve, you'll keep your pistol primed at all times – never mind the danger. Turn to **320**.

167

There is a flash, followed by a strange sensation of falling through darkness. Then you find yourself standing in a large, richly decorated chamber. In front of you, a stern-featured woman, dressed in silken finery and sitting on an imposing throne, speaks to you. If you have 'basic kal' written on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **325**. If you do not, turn to **121**.

168

You find yourself staring at Reinhardt – but now it really *is* Reinhardt in his own body. You have scant seconds to comprehend what has happened before a sword flashes in front of your face. You have switched bodies! In the box marked 'Companion' on your *Adventure Sheet*, if you don't already have any values noted, write '5' next to SKILL and '8' next to STAMINA. Then tick the box marked 'Switch' in the bottom right-hand corner. This box shows that you have switched bodies with your companion. Unless you switch back, use the SKILL and STAMINA scores of your companion.

Write any equipment you gain while in this body in the bottom part of the Equipment box, so that you can keep track of who has what. However, you have access to any equipment carried by Reinhardt as long as he is with you. You now know how to switch bodies. Whenever your scalp prickles, you can change bodies with Reinhardt or Mencius. You will not be given this as an option, but you may choose to switch anyway. To switch, simply add together the digits of the paragraph you are at, then add the result to the paragraph you are at. For example, if you were at paragraph **156**, you would add the digits (1 + 5 + 6 = 12), then add this to the paragraph you were at (12 + 156 = 168), and then turn to paragraph **168**.

Now fight the second highwayman.

Second HIGHWAYMAN SKILL 6 STAMINA 7

If you win, turn to **249**.

169

The body of the Demon explodes in a sheet of flame, then becomes a column of smoke, which shoots out the window. Al-Bakbuk is awe-struck. Referring to the thing you killed as 'genie', he congratulates you warmly, suggesting that you accompany him to the tavern for a round of celebratory drinks. If you go with him, turn to **73**. If you do not, turn to **255**.

170

You live a monk-like existence while feeding and training your dog. You decide to call the dog Kurt, since he reminds you of a favourite uncle of yours (note down 'Kurt' on your *Adventure Sheet*). Then mark four crosses on your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **241**.

171

With a great effort of will you snap your drooping head upright. You must act quickly. Will you attack the wizard (turn to **81**), or flee (turn to **288**)?

172

Hunger gnaws at your stomach, sapping your strength; lose 4 points from your STAMINA. If you continue to climb the mountains, turn to **82**. If you turn back the way you came, turn to **277**.

173

Examining the corpse, you find that it has jet-black skin and pointed ears. You shiver – a sensation of evil which sometimes comes over you when you are in the presence of mages assails you now. You continue along the tunnel until you reach a fork. If Kurt is with you, turn to **230**. If you (and any companion you may have) are wearing a cloak, turn to **389**. Otherwise, turn to **329**.

174

With a look of desperation in his eyes, Mencius takes to the air, flapping his arms frantically. He flies higher up the tower, and you charge after him, trying to get within range in order to strike a death blow. You follow him all the way up the tower, then through a trapdoor on to the roof. From there you can only watch helplessly as he heads out over the sea. You cannot follow him that way. Who knows where he will end up? One thing is sure: he has escaped you. You must start all over again, tracking him to the end of this accursed world. Do enough years of life remain to you to accomplish that? Only time will tell.

175

You have no idea where you are. You left the Margrave's castle in late autumn, but now the heat of the sun shining from a clear sky is almost unbearable. The terrain here is unfamiliar – you don't even recognize the trees and shrubs. How do you propose to track Mencius? Do you:

Follow the river downstream?	Turn to **283**
Light a fire?	Turn to **96**
Draw a Holy Symbol?	Turn to **313**
Climb to the mountain top?	Turn to **139**

176

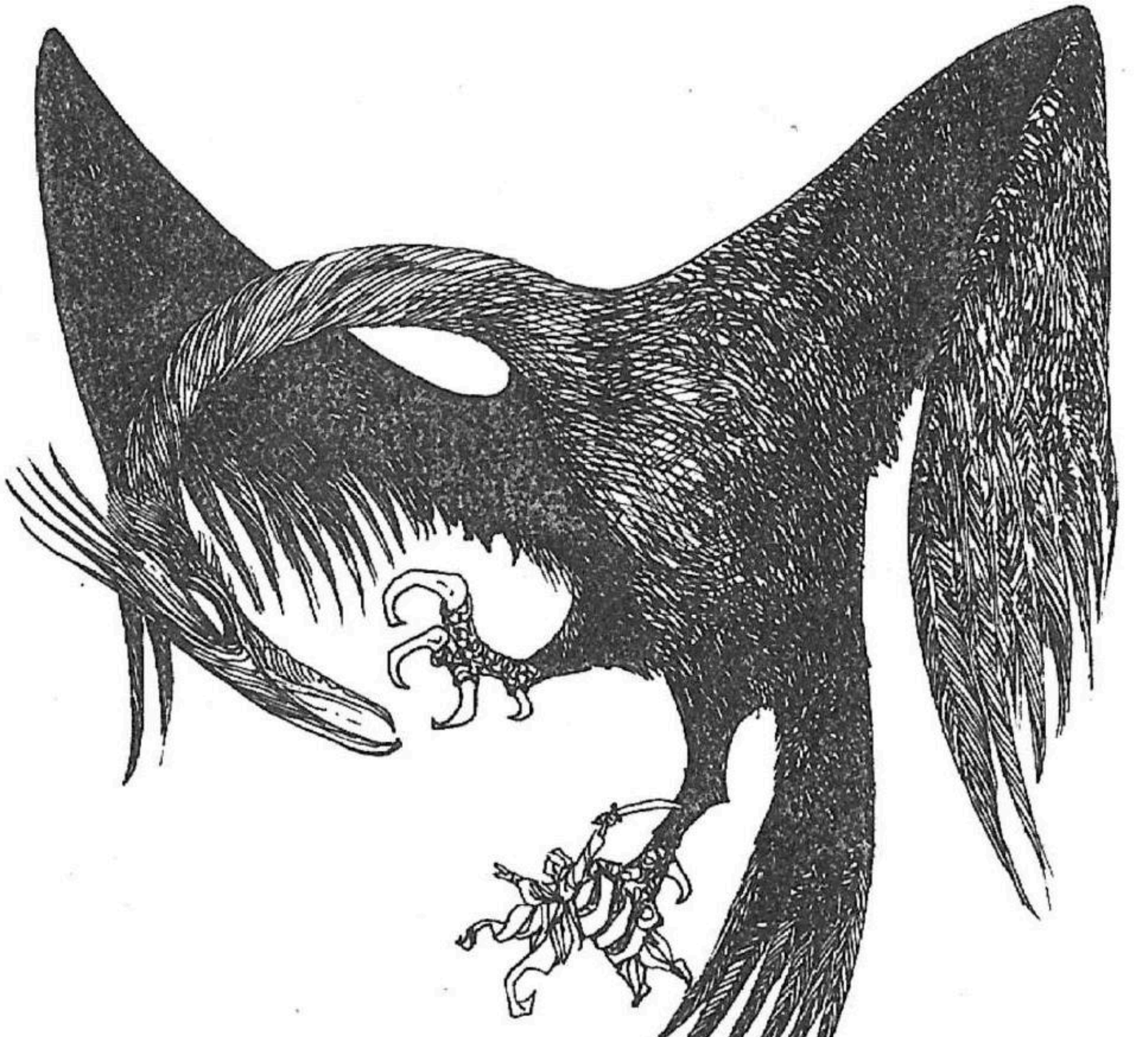
Kurt leads you unerringly through the countryside until you arrive at a secluded valley. He drags you to a cave mouth and starts barking loudly. After a while, an old man emerges, his head swathed in the same strange cloth hat you had noticed on several of the townsfolk. Turn to **308**.

177

Kurt is sniffing around by the tent with a casual aimlessness that doesn't seem very appropriate to the presence of a mage. In the tent, you notice that the magician is chewing on a dried fish. That confirms it – he is not a mage! Pulling back from the tent, you almost bump into one of the tent-dwellers, who eyes you critically. You murmur a hasty apology and leave. Turn to **241**.

178

You slump down on to the hard earth, painfully aware of your lack of food. Lose 1 point from your STAMINA. You sink into a fitful sleep, staring up at the unfamiliar stars of this god-cursed land. Next morning, your empty stomach is even more painful. Turn to **285**.



179

After some distance the tunnel gives out into a huge underground chamber. Here the light is brighter, and you are surprised to notice that there are buildings. The inhabitants are mostly creatures with jet-black skins, dressed in weird clothing, who strut about like monarchs. Here and there you can see other creatures, including some humans, working as slaves. Near by, another larger tunnel leads away from the chamber. One of the dwellers below is riding a huge beetle towards the tunnel. Seizing the moment, you chase after it and leap up on to the shiny black carapace. The rider whirls, drawing a dagger, and defends himself.

DWELLER BELOW	SKILL 8	STAMINA 6

As you fight, the beetle trundles along the tunnel. If you have a companion, he makes it on to the beetle's back but doesn't help you in the fight. If you win, turn to **344**.

180

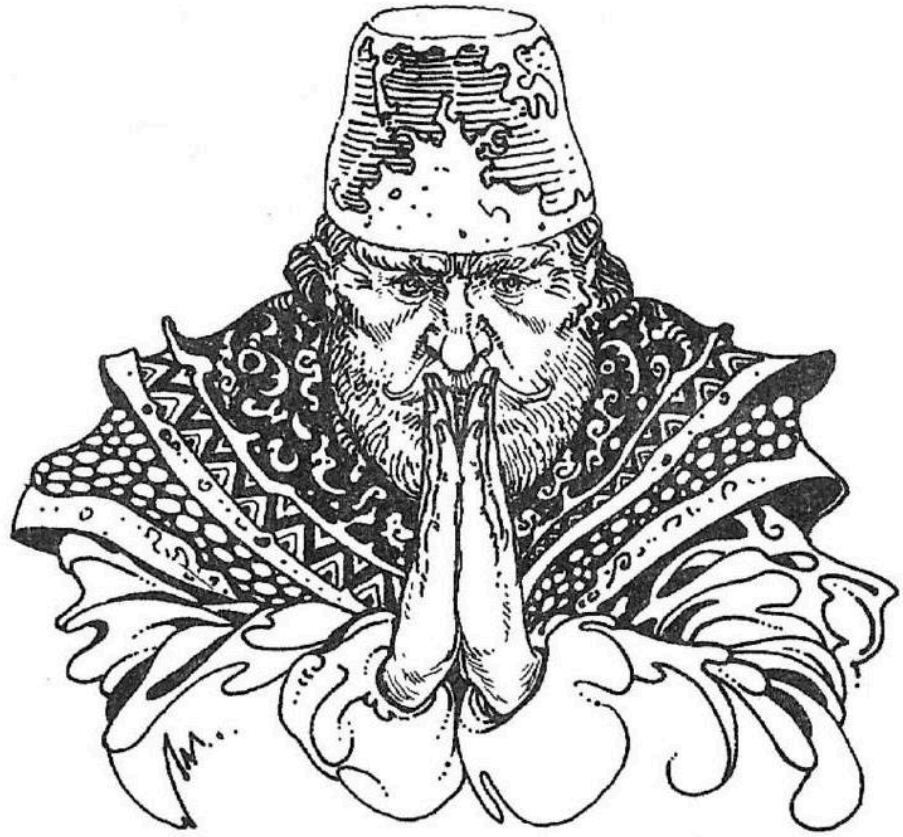
'My mission is to hunt down and destroy Mencius . . . and all other sorcerers,' you declare, fixing his eyes with a challenging stare.

'What? Even the good ones?' enquires Khasim, raising an eyebrow. 'Ah, but I forget, you are not from our world of Titan. Perhaps where you come from, all the wizards *are* evil. Anyway, I hope you'll spare me long enough for me to help you rid our land of Mencius.' That, at least, you *can* agree to. Turn to **61**.

181

Now that the intensity of battle is over, you start to feel the pain caused by the venom as it gets to work on your muscles. You are alone in an unknown wilderness. You must act quickly if you are to stay alive. Do you:

Try to suck the poison from the wound?	Turn to **12**
Bathe in the river?	Turn to **332**
Yell for help?	Turn to **280**



182

After mentioning the name of Al-Haddar, you easily find his house on a quiet street near the west gate. When you enquire within, you meet the storyteller himself, a powerful-looking man with drooping jowls.

You explain what you are doing in the city and he welcomes you warmly, offering you the hospitality of his house. After introducing you to his beautiful wife, Dunyazad, he claps his hand three times, summoning a servant to bring drinks and dainty sweetmeats. He explains that, although he doesn't know anything that may be directly relevant to your search, he does have a large stock of stories. 'Sometimes my stories can help a person with their difficulties,' he explains, 'for none of them are imaginary – all are true – and the truth is a powerful thing.'

If you accept Al-Haddar's hospitality and remain in his house, turn to **158**. If you would like to do some more searching elsewhere before night falls, note down the number '158' – you may return to Al-Haddar's whenever you are given the option to go to the place where you have arranged to stay. If you have the word 'trail' written down, turn to **205**; otherwise, turn to **241**.

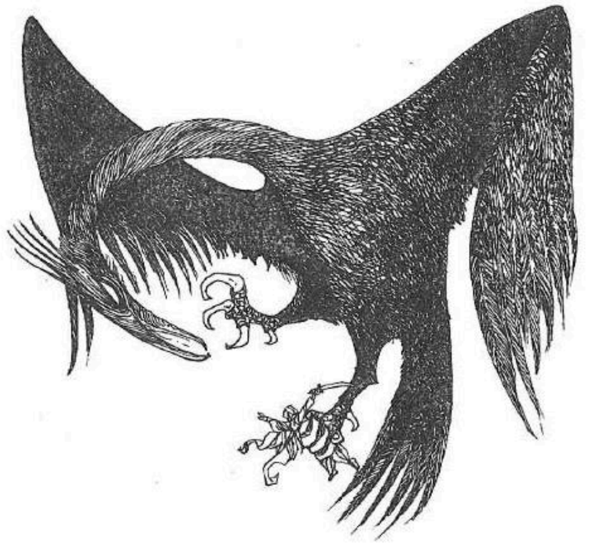
183

Dogs fed on goat's meat usually hate the smell of a sorcerer and will attack without urging. Kurt, however, seems strangely reluctant. If you decide to talk to the wizard, turn to **362**. If you prefer to use another method of attack, choose one of the following (you must possess the item to use it):

A rapier	Turn to **237**
A broadsword	Turn to **7**
A rope of human hair	Turn to **86**
A pistol	Turn to **330**

184

The stallholder quickly lowers the price to 2 Gold Pieces. If you buy at the new price, cross the money off your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **116**. If you can't pay, you must find a different way of tracking Mencius. If you make enquiries in the town, turn to **318**. If you use a Holy Symbol, turn to **78**.



185

What kind of bullet are you loading into your pistol? Take the letters that spell out the type of bullet, and substitute the numbers from the following chart. Then add all the numbers together and turn to the paragraph with that number.

A	D	E	I	L	M	N	O	R	S	V
5	7	4	27	3	42	20	33	13	10	9

186

The magical energy bolt strikes you full force, exploding your body into its constituent atoms. For scant moments consciousness remains, and you hear again Mencius's words: 'I curse you to the end of eternity . . .'

187

You have no idea where you are. When you left the Margrave's castle, the weather was late autumn, cool and wet, but here the sun burns you more fiercely than in summer. You recognize none of the terrain, not even the kinds of trees and shrubs that are growing near by. How will you track Mencius? Do you:

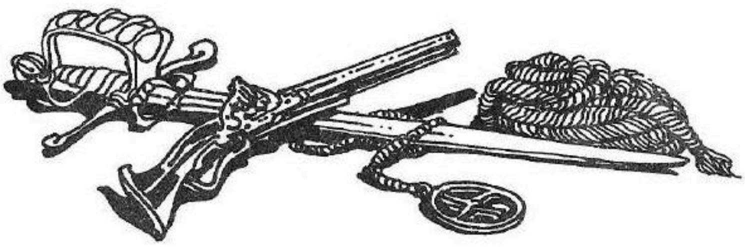
Follow the river downstream?	Turn to **245**
Draw a Holy Symbol?	Turn to **103**
Climb to the mountain top?	Turn to **395**
Light a fire?	Turn to **37**

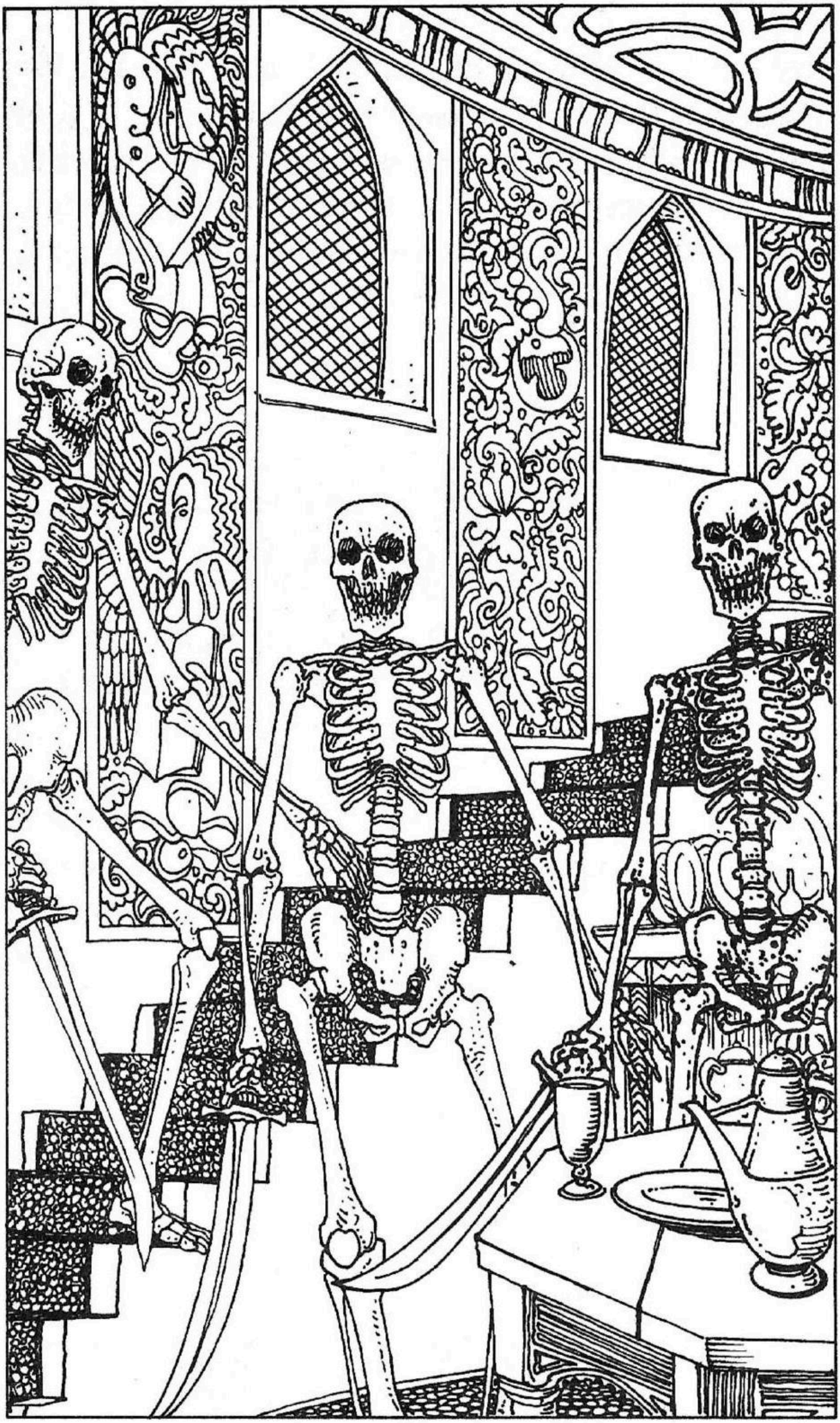
188

Khasim's comment about flying remains a mystery for a while, but he does point out that Mencius has been in Kallamehr for a few hours at most, so you will arrive hard on the villain's heels (note down 'early' on your *Adventure Sheet*). After you have rested a while longer, Khasim picks up the carpet and escorts you out of the cave into the valley. If you have a shackles key, turn to **56**; otherwise, turn to **227**.

189

Back at the tavern, you meet the same fellow you encountered the previous time; he seems to be something of a regular. Once again he is happy to buy a drink or two for you. Turn to **55**.





190

The Skeletons fall back, leaving a path for you to the stairs. They stand, grinning soullessly back at you as you make your way between them. From the chamber above, a mocking voice wafts down. 'So, you've had the good manners to bring my book back to me?' Turn to **392**.

191

The pain is intense, but you manage to cleanse your body of some of the poison. Lose 2 further points from your STAMINA. If you are still alive, you are very weak. Turn to **242**.

192

Erase the tick from the 'Switch' box on your *Adventure Sheet*. Reinhardt is furious at having been tricked into switching back into Mencius's body, and he leaps at you.

'Beware! You'll upset the carpet!' cries Khasim, but his call is unheeded. If you have Kurt with you, turn to **235**. If you haven't, turn to **21**.

193

You live in a dirty room, somewhat envious of your dog's regular diet of goat meat. You name your dog Kurt (note him down on your *Adventure Sheet*) after your maternal uncle, whom he resembles. Over the course of the week you explore the town a little, learning some more about these strange people (note down 'basic kal' on your *Adventure Sheet* if it is not there already). If you wish to do some shopping for essential supplies during the week, turn to **248**. Otherwise, turn to **304**.

194

You are just wondering where you should go next when a jaunty figure strides up to you, grinning all over its too-familiar face. It's Mencius, flaunting his borrowed body. There are people all around, so you hope that he will be loath to attract attention to himself with serious magic; all the same, your eyes dart around for possible avenues of escape. 'I promised revenge, and I shall have it,' he says in your own language, but with a friendly smile on his face and an easy tone in his voice. 'It will be my pleasure to extinguish your soul utterly, and it will be especially easy, as this magic-rich world has amplified my powers threefold. As a small gesture of my contempt for your abilities, by the way, allow me to present you with this.' So saying, he hands you a box. Your scalp prickles as you imagine what may lie within. If you have a Book of Craft, turn to **33**; otherwise, turn to **275**.

195

It's easier to descend than to ascend, but you have to take care not to slip. Still, after a short time you are back at the foot of the mountain, following the river downstream. If you have a ruby ring, turn to **159**. Otherwise, turn to **245**.

196

The old man continues glancing about nervously until you are safely back in town. Before parting from you, he suggests that you make for Kallamehr, the biggest city in the area. It seems likely that Mencius would head for the largest town, the better to hide and cook up his evil schemes. Turn to **348**.

197

Before you can move, you are seized and dragged along an ornate corridor, which gives on to a courtyard with a particularly beautiful ornamental pool and fountain. A wooden block stands in the middle of the courtyard, and you struggle even harder when you recognize the meaning of the reddish brown stains and the nick marks on it. But it is all in vain: in your weakened state you are no match for the bulky courtiers. You are unceremoniously pushed down on to the block and an ugly man wielding a large, curved sword approaches. The rest is darkness.

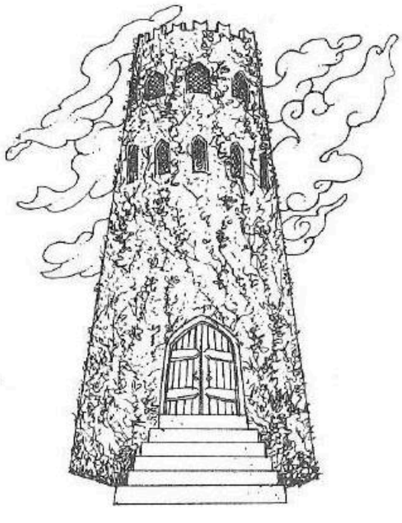
198

How do you plan to track the wizard? Will you:

Draw a Holy Symbol?	Turn to **78**
Make enquiries in the town?	Turn to **318**
Train a dog?	Turn to **35**

199

You wander through the streets, amazed at the number of people bustling around. As you penetrate deeper into the city, getting closer to the sea cliff, you are frequently accosted by hawkers pressing their wares on you and by beggars trying to part you from your loose change. Brushing them aside, you enter a large market square, over which broods an imposing tower, clinging to the very edge of the cliff. You stare up at it. Is it your imagination, or does some malevolent presence return your gaze from one of the upper windows? You have faced more formidable situations, however, so you push through the marketplace and ascend the steps leading up to the tower's brass-studded door. Opening the door, you find yourself in the great hall. There is not a soul in sight, then a voice behind you calls your name. Check your *Adventure Sheet*. If you have a wizard's pouch, turn to **337**. Otherwise, turn to **138**.



200

You kick the headless body down the slope, and throw the head after it. It doesn't quite reach the river, so you scramble down the slope. Near the bottom, you slip and twist your foot painfully. Stepping carefully, you cover the final metres and push Mencius into the fast-flowing stream. He is carried fifteen metres, then becomes tangled under a stray branch. As you limp along the bank, you notice something strange: Mencius's body has not swelled up, despite being immersed in water. Your ankle hurts, so you check it out. Strangely, there is a scar running along the side of your foot. You don't remember ever being injured there . . . but you do remember the Margrave's foolish young son cutting his foot open while playing with his rapier. That would explain the rapier and red clothes! Somehow you have switched bodies with Reinhardt! That means Reinhardt must have ended up in your body . . . or in Mencius's! If the latter is true, then the most evil sorcerer of them all is now free, and is roaming this country in the body of his greatest foe! You claw your way back up the slope and rest for a few hours. Before nightfall you check your possessions. Turn to **75**.

201

When you are halfway along the plank, the flying ship's colourful captain gives it a sharp twist, cackling madly as you tumble off it. With the mountainside rushing past you ever faster and a painful pressure building in your lungs, you can only await a sudden and final impact with the ground . . . Turn to **214**.

202

With a final blast of energy Mencius demolishes his opponent. But he is clearly weakened by the effort – his first thought is of escape. With a look of desperation in his eyes, Mencius takes to the air, flapping his arms frantically. He flies higher up the tower, and you charge after him, trying to get within range in order to strike a death blow. You follow him all the way up the tower, then through a trapdoor on to the roof. From there you can only watch helplessly as he heads out over the sea. You cannot follow him that way. Who knows where he will end up? One thing is sure: he has escaped you. You must start all over again, tracking him to the end of this accursed world. Do enough years of life remain to you to accomplish that? Only time will tell.

203

You take the rope off the mage cautiously, keeping your eyes on him but avoiding his gaze. He doesn't try anything, standing still and calm as you back away. He spreads his arms slowly and smiles. Turn to **253**.

204

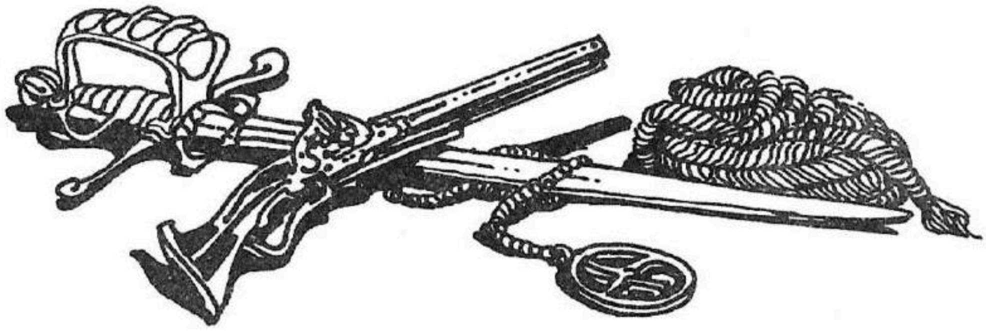
There is shouting from outside the room, then some men rush in. They separate you from the pickpocket and drag you out of the room. You have no idea as to the thief's fate, but you are hustled to the town gate and forcibly ejected. You are out in the wilds once more. A road stretches from the town, but you can't be sure where it leads. If you follow the road, turn to **76**. If you want to climb a hill to get a better view of the land, turn to **25**.

205

You wander along a bustling thoroughfare, unsure where to start your search, wondering where you might find Reinhardt. Being a lord himself, and an arrogant one at that, he may well try to contact the ruler of this city; so you start looking for a castle or a lord's mansion. You accost a few city folk, drawing curious stares but little concrete help. Finally, however, from a vantage point near the sea cliff, you catch sight of a tower, further along the cliffs. Could that be the place? You walk along the road towards the tower, then enter a large marketplace, full of traders of every description. You push through the crowds towards the tower – and arrive at the foot of a flight of steps. If you have a Book of Craft, turn to **98**. Otherwise, turn to **13**.

206

By repeatedly pointing at your mouth, you manage to convey your hunger and the villagers respond by offering you some food. Their honey cakes and light wine are no banquet, but they taste far better than the last food you had – at Mechtner's funeral. While eating, you try to explain to the villagers that you are looking for Mencius, but they cannot comprehend you. Finally one of them has an idea. After your meal, he leads you out of the village and along a mountain path. In a sheltered valley a plume of smoke emerges from a hole in the rock; below it a cave mouth yawns. The villager leads you into the cave and calls out. After a while a light appears and an old man bearing a torch approaches. He is wearing loose robes and for some reason has a cloth wrapped round his head. He recognizes the villager and the two of them talk for a while. Finally the old man disappears into the recesses of the cave, returning with a book. He dismisses the villager then, after setting his torch in a wall sconce, he flips through the pages of the book. When he finds his place, he begins to read, muttering and gesturing with his free hand. He is a sorcerer, and he is casting some kind of spell! If you attack immediately, turn to **81**. If you wait to see what happens, turn to **324**.



207

'Mencius is dead,' you protest. 'I disposed of his corpse.'

'But he had switched bodies with his companion as a side-effect of entering this bubble of reality.' It feels as if he has punched you in the stomach. Mencius is still alive! And Reinhardt, the impetuous young lord who freed the wizard, has paid for his foolishness with his life. 'By the way, you have something of mine. I'll have it back, if you *don't* mind too much!' your host says, clicking his fingers. The ruby ring floats up into the air and over to his hand (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*). Turn to **368**.

208

You gaze deeply into Mencius's eyes, and concentrate on switching bodies. There is a period of disorientation, then you find yourself staring at the body you have just vacated. Mencius's lips curl in a contemptuous snarl. He draws a sword and casually hacks down a passerby. Too late you understand his plan. As horrified screams arise from all sides, he fixes your eyes with an unavoidable stare, using his magical powers to force the body switch. You find yourself standing with a bloody sword in your hand, surrounded by a hundred hostile witnesses. Mencius seems tired by the exertion of forcing the body swap, but he manages a cheery wave as you are seized by twenty hands and dragged off. At the palace, you are tried before Kallamehr's ruler, Asiah Albudur. After hearing the facts of the case, she wastes no time in passing sentence. Turn to **197**.

209

Since you were not using weapons, you both recover 2 points of STAMINA for every 3 points lost in the fight (if you lost 2 points, you recover 1 point). Reinhardt is dazed, but he should do as you say – for the moment at least. Turn to **93**.

210

Your companion notices the claw hanging from your belt, and he seems rather surprised. He takes it from you, saying 'Shauca' repeatedly, and shows it to the other drinkers. Soon you are surrounded by an admiring crowd, all jabbering incomprehensibly. Unfortunately one of them, a vicious-looking fellow with bulging muscles and foul breath, takes the opportunity to challenge you to a fight.

MUSCULAR BRUISER	SKILL 6	STAMINA 9

If you reduce the bruiser to 1 point of STAMINA, turn to **137**.

211

You can't quite follow what it is the men are demanding, but you do catch the number 5 and what you are fairly sure is the local word for 'gold pieces'. One man's outstretched hand makes the meaning clear. If you pay the 5 Gold Pieces, cross them off your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **80**. If you refuse to pay, turn to **399**.

212

Just as you start to suck at the poison, a spasm of pain racks your body. You try to spit out the venom, but swallow involuntarily. Your end is swift. Your journey finishes here.

213

'It doesn't matter,' 'Reinhardt' spits, a new edge appearing in his voice. 'I shall have my revenge anyway.' He starts to chant and gesture at you. Turn to **305**.

214

. . . like a candle snuffed out, the blinding light of the sun is replaced by absolute darkness. The sensation of falling is gone, and now there is no pain. Then, with an unpleasantly familiar feeling, your feet alight on solid ground. A guttering torch burns in a wall-bracket. You are in a cell. A crack sunders the floor. Somehow you have returned to the Margrave's castle. However, you have failed in your mission. You must live with that failure for the rest of your days.

215

There's a loud crack and the globe detonates, spraying sparks all around. Your scalp prickles with static. Add 1 to your LUCK. If you have a shackles key or a Scar (Sneeka or Shauca), you may either return to the town (turn to **380**) or press on (turn to **285**). Otherwise, turn to **28**.

216

For a long time, Reinhardt had done nothing but grumble as you walked. For the last hour, however, he has been silent. You tell him that he can rest, and he collapses like a sack of cabbages. There is no food to fill the yawning void in your stomach. Lose 1 point from your STAMINA. You drift off to sleep, staring up at the unfamiliar stars of this strange land.

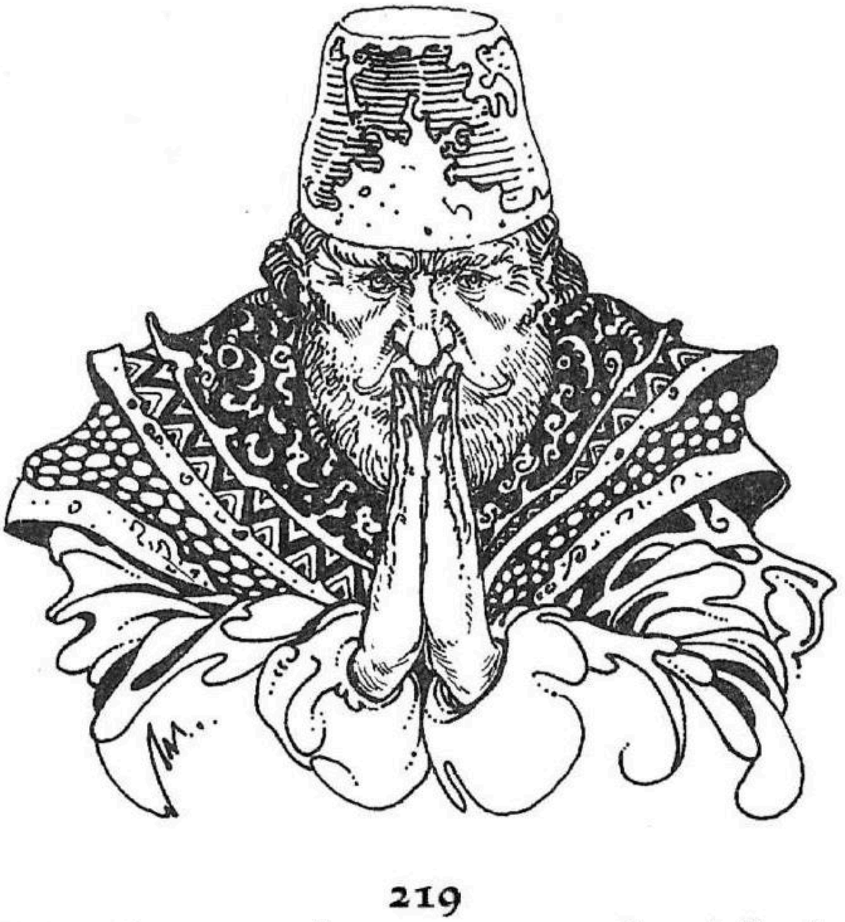
Next morning, Reinhardt is dead. Too late, you realize that the frail body he inhabited was not only old and weak, but also badly injured. You are too hungry to mourn and too weak to dig a proper grave. You check his clothing and are surprised to find the key that he had used to free Mencius from his shackles. For some reason – perhaps guilt – he had been carrying the instrument by which he brought about his own downfall (note down the shackles key on your *Adventure Sheet*). Turn to **285**.

217

The vizier beams when he takes the robe from you. 'Hazah be praised!' he exclaims. 'With this robe Good will surely prevail! And now I must repay your kindness.' He puts on the robe then claps his hands three times. With a resounding crash the ground splits open; a huge Efreet, with a face that would frighten an army of a thousand men, emerges and bows low before the vizier. 'Fetch the sacred mace of Tsui!' shouts the vizier. The Efreet bows once more, then leaps back down the crack from which it emerged. In the blink of an eye it reappears, bearing in its arms a mighty steel club, intricately decorated with a pattern of writhing Dragons. The vizier presents this mace to you and commands his awesome servant to begone. The Efreet leaps down the chasm, which closes above its head. Note the sacred mace on your *Adventure Sheet*. If you use it in battle you may add 4 to your Attack Strength. Gain up to 4 points of LUCK and turn to **361**.

218

You find a crystal goblet inlaid with jewels which looks to be worth a fair amount, so you pocket it and leave (note it down on your *Adventure Sheet*). On the way out, you pass a man leading a donkey; he stares at you intently, but you pay him no attention and press on. If you wish to start searching for Mencius straight away, turn to **198**. If you prefer to spend time getting used to these people's ways, turn to **189** if you have already been to the tavern or to **293** if you haven't.



219

Examining the wound, you can see the dull gleam of the silver bullet, lodged in Mencius's gut. Without proper tools, you'll just have to use your fingers! As you probe into the cavity, Mencius's body jerks in spasms of unconscious pain. As quickly as you can, you get a grip on the bullet with your thumb and finger and ease it out. Pocketing the blood-stained silver bullet (note it down on your Equipment List), you rip up Mencius's robe to make a wad of cloth. It's a crude way to bandage a wound but, tied in place, it seems to work.

Mencius soon comes round, and stares up at you, bleary-eyed. 'What sorcery is this?' he demands. 'You look exactly like me!' His eyes contain none of the infernal malice you are used to, only bewilderment. The truth hits you like a charging bison – Mencius has switched bodies! The poor wretch before you is really Reinhardt, whose body you now inhabit. You tell him what has happened, and he begs you to set things right. Turn to **67**.

220

At the far end of the bay is a promontory. The slope is not very steep, so you scale it, getting a good view of the coastline for several kilometres. The only distinctive feature is the city which you can see at the limit of your vision.

You spend another night in the open, en route to the city; but this time the gentle lapping of the waves lulls you to sleep, and you are undisturbed. To maintain your STAMINA you must consume 1 Provision (cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*). If you don't have any Provisions, you must lose 4 points from your STAMINA. Next day you enter the city. Turn to **100**.

221

What impulse led you to free the man? You are a magehunter, after all, sworn enemy of all sorcerers. Still, there is something, well, different about this one. He says a few words to you in a strange, guttural tongue. You reply with your name, and ask him for his, but he just shrugs. He holds up his hands in a gesture of surrender, then points to the book. When you fail to respond, he picks it up, flips the pages and begins chanting again. Turn to **262**.

222

The Gold Hex spins lazily through the air towards Mencius, landing at his feet and rolling a little way before coming to a stop. Mencius barely pauses in his spell. Then a cloud of purple smoke billows forth from the hex and an old man wearing a cloth hat suddenly appears. Mencius stops his chanting and stares, open-mouthed. The old man, whom you recognize as the wizard you encountered in the valley, immediately starts to cast a spell of his own. Soon the two are embroiled in a magical duel from which you hasten to take cover. Despite his initial shock, it soon becomes obvious that Mencius is the stronger of the two. If you have the word 'reflect' written down, turn to **88**; otherwise, turn to **202**.

223

You lock eyes with Reinhardt and feel the disorientation of the body swap. If there is a tick in the 'Switch' box on your *Adventure Sheet*, erase it – you are now back in Reinhardt's body. If there is no tick in the box, tick it now – you are in Mencius's body. Turn to **28**.

224

After a while the dizziness passes and you turn your attention once more to tracking the wizard. Turn to **32**.

225

On a sudden impulse, you fling the coin at your opponent. It strikes him and bounces off uselessly, barely distracting him (cross the gold hex off your *Adventure Sheet*). Then there is a flash, and a cloud of purple smoke appears, in the midst of which stands the wizard you spared earlier. It seems your generosity is to be rewarded, since he wastes no time in casting a spell at your enemy, who you now realize to be Mencius, somehow escaped from his corpse and ensconced in an all-too-familiar body. The two start blazing away at each other with magical pyrotechnics, and it dawns on you that Mencius's already fearful power has grown. If you stay to assist, turn to **42**. If you take this opportunity to flee, turn to **376**.

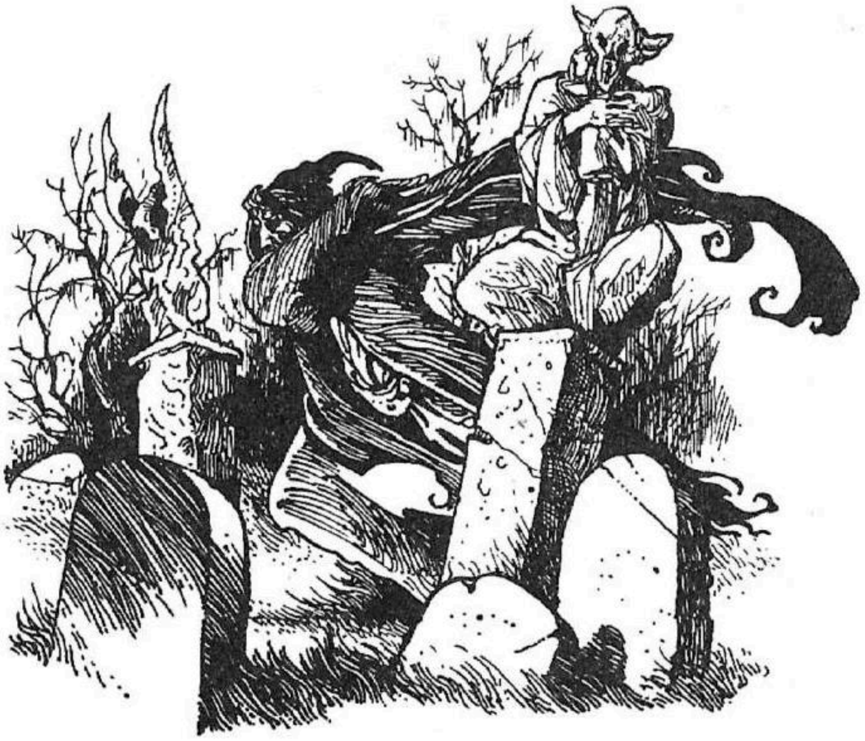
226

You plunge your sword into his chest. There is a gasp from the tavern folk. Several of them grab weapons and surround you, while another races out of the tavern. There are too many of them to fight, so you surrender peacefully, hoping that someone will be able to clear up the misunderstanding. Soon some guards arrive and drag you off to a large building. Barely aware of what is happening to you, you stand trial for murder, accused in a language you can't understand. You are found guilty; the sentence: death.

227

Reinhardt complains when Khasim lays the carpet on the ground and tells him to get on it. It's true that you too feel a little foolish but, if you don't trust

Khasim a little, you won't be able to get anywhere. Finally you are all on the carpet, sitting down. With barely a jolt the carpet floats up into the air. Reinhardt lets out a shriek of fear but, without giving him a chance to speak, Khasim says, 'To Kallamehr!' and you shoot off with the speed of a diving falcon, the air buffeting your face and making your scalp prickle. Turn to **93**.



228

'With his dying blow, the Genie Prince hurled his vanquisher out of the window of the tower. Before he landed on the soft sand, Al-Ra'ad Al-Kasif with a piteous wail expired, and was seen no more in this world. His killer, meanwhile, turned back towards the tower, but he found his way blocked by three opponents: a venomous, hissing snake, a snarling mountain lion, and a fluttering raven. A voice sounded from behind the brass-studded door of the tower. "You must fight the most dangerous of these three if you wish to enter the tower."' Which of the three will you choose?

The raven?	Turn to **354**
The lion?	Turn to **115**
The snake?	Turn to **254**

229

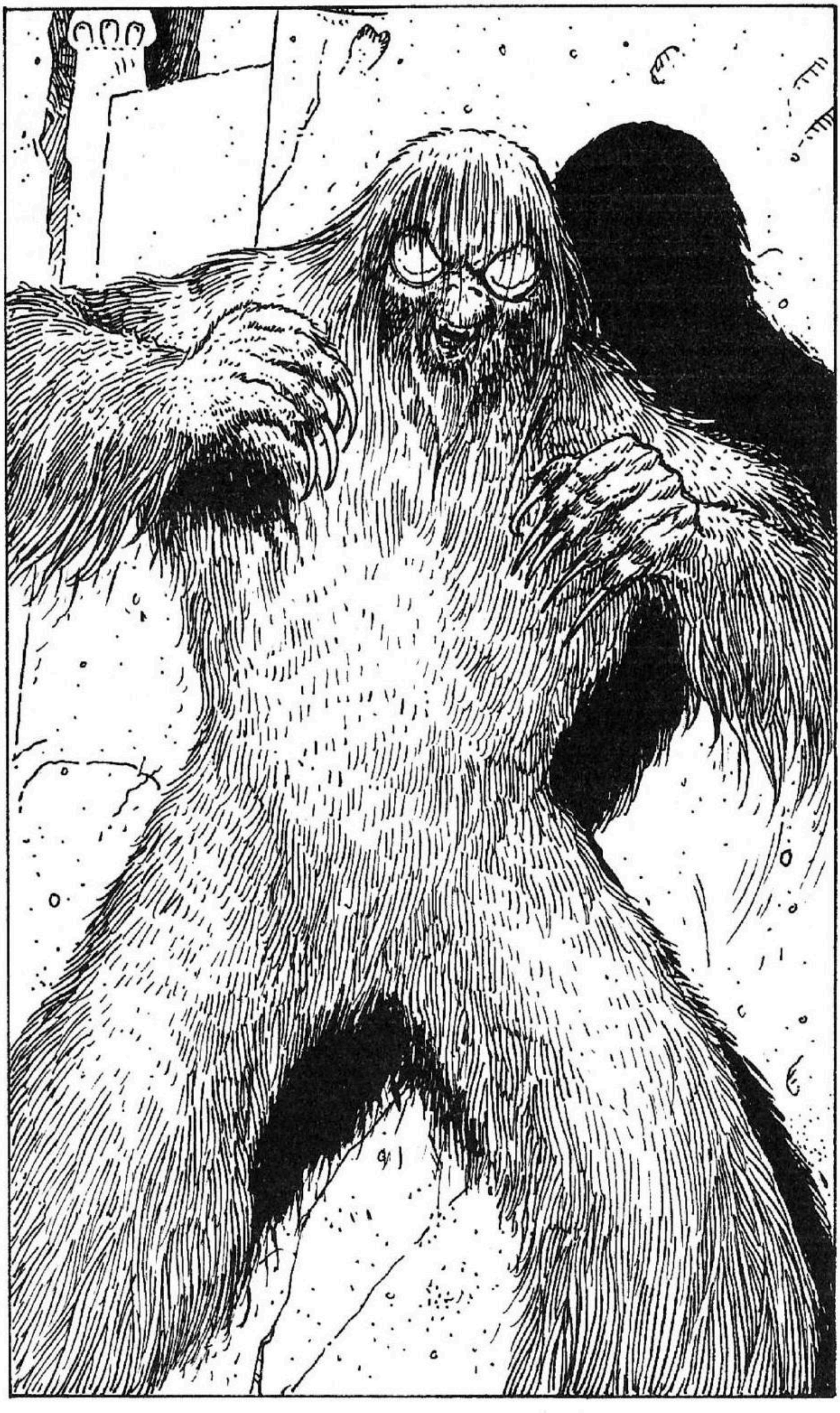
You have walked for just a few hundred metres when you notice a cave mouth in the mountainside, well concealed on either side with rocks. No sooner have you spotted it than out of it scuttles a huge scorpion, its metre-long carapace gleaming in the sunshine. You have heard of such creatures, but never knew they could grow to such a size.

GIANT SCORPION	SKILL 8	STAMINA 8

In every Attack Round, the Scorpion may attack twice. The first attack is with its claws; conduct the battle as normal. The second attack is with its sting. Compare Attack Strengths as normal. If your Attack Strength is higher, you have not wounded the Scorpion, merely parried its sting. If its Attack Strength is higher, you lose no STAMINA yet, but note down that you have been stung. If you fail to defeat the Scorpion within 4 rounds after being stung, you will die. If you defeat the Giant Scorpion, turn to **63**.

230

Kurt, who had previously sniffed suspiciously at the dead Dweller Below, now growls warningly at the left-hand passage. Glad of his help, you creep warily along the right-hand tunnel. Turn to **179**.



231

Skirting the town walls and keeping out of sight of the guards on the gate, you continue on your way. The sun's glare still punishes you, and your breathing is now coming hard – the air feels thick and coarse in your lungs. You are concentrating so hard on simply remaining conscious that you are caught by surprise when the attack comes. A huge, shaggy shape with legs like tree-trunks and lidless eyes like water-filled saucers rears up in front of you and swats you to the ground with a single sweep of its razor-sharp claw. Lose 1 point of STAMINA.

SHAGGY SHAMBLER SKILL 9 STAMINA 14

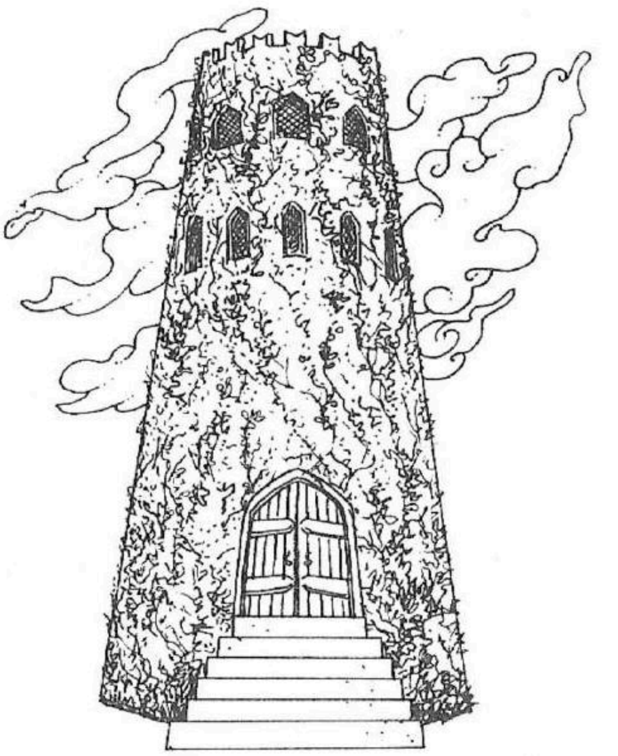
You may *escape* the Shambler if you struggle to your feet and flee straight away (turn to **135**). Otherwise, you must fight. If you win, turn to **334**.

232

You accost a few townspeople, trying to get your meaning across. The first three don't even try to listen to you but hurry off in disgust. The next one listens but finally gives up, unable to understand. You try your best with the next, pointing at yourself, since you realize that Reinhardt looks far more like you than any of these silk-swathed folk. The stranger is a wiry, sharp-nosed individual who seems keen to try to help; in fact, he ushers you into a nearby building, out of the bustling street. When you try to explain again by pointing at yourself, the man holds an object up in front of you. If you have a Book of Craft, turn to **385**. Otherwise, turn to **108**.

233

Further enquiry reveals that Saba is not the only foreigner matching Mencius's current description to have arrived recently in Kallamehr. A street urchin tells you about a strange-looking person who somehow managed to obtain an audience with the city's ruler, Asiah Albudur; shortly afterwards, this person was granted permission to live in the Rangor Tower, overlooking the market – a building which has stayed empty since the death of the city's previous ruler. Mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet*. If you go straight to Rangor Tower, turn to **312**. Otherwise, you may go to the bazaar to check on Saba (turn to **364**) or choose another option (turn to **241**).



234

After a few minutes the quaking subsides. Frightened funeral guests emerge cautiously from their hiding places. Guards are dashing about in all directions, and a single question is on everyone's lips: 'Where is Reinhardt?' The alarm is raised. A guard rushes in to say that the new Margrave was last seen in the dungeons. Fearing the worst, you lead a squad of guards to Mencius's cell. Sure enough, there is no sign of the wizard. A huge crack sunders the floor of his cell, and an unconscious guard lies, sprawled near the door. When he comes to, the guard explains what happened. The new Margrave was talking with the wizard, who seemed to be promising him something. Then Reinhardt untied the rope round Mencius's wrists and unlocked his shackles. The wizard shouted out some words, and the castle started to shake. Mencius spun around, and green smoke filled the air. The last thing the guard remembers is the floor splitting open and the two men disappearing. Turn to **320**.

235

Your loyal hound jumps forward to protect you, snarling at Reinhardt then worrying at his arm. Reinhardt, coward that he is, shrinks away from the dog in fear, his anger quickly evaporating.

'Have patience,' Khasim urges him. 'You will be back in your own body soon enough.' Turn to **93**.

236

'You didn't have to kill him!' Reinhardt pipes up. 'He saved my life.'

'Killing mages is my job,' you remind him grimly. Turn to **384**.

237

Flimsy though it is, the rapier can still impale as effectively as any sword. Your tiger-swift thrust catches the wizard in the chest and, to your surprise, not only pierces his skin, but runs him through! His hands flap vainly at the sword, but he is dead, and he knows it. His body seems to fold up as it collapses. You retrieve the rapier. If you have a Shauca Scar, turn to **125** Otherwise, turn to **384**.

238

You check on Reinhardt, staring deep into fear-stricken eyes. For a moment you think you have fallen off the carpet, then you remember the unpleasant sensation of the body switch. If the 'Switch' box on your *Adventure Sheet* is ticked, turn to **192**. But if it is not ticked, turn to **303**.

239

The clownish figure walks over to you. You still can't make out his face, just a pair of mischievous, glinting eyes. He says a few words to you in a language you don't understand, then clicks his fingers. Turn to **300**.

240

You haven't gone more than ten metres when you hear sounds coming from the tunnel ahead. There must be more Dwellers Below on their way! If you hide in the alcove in order to ambush them, turn to **26**. If you turn around and hurry back down the tunnel, turn to **179**.

241

If you have three crosses marked on your *Adventure Sheet* and do not have the word 'home' written there, cross off the word 'early', if you have it, and turn to **194**. If you have the word 'fame' underlined on the *Sheet*, turn to **383**. If you have the word 'fame' but it is not underlined, underline it now. If you have five or more crosses on your *Adventure Sheet*, write down the word 'fame' if it is not there already. Otherwise you should choose which of the following actions you wish to take. Will you:

Approach the authorities (you must have 'kal')?	Turn to **47**
Make enquiries and hunt for clues . . .	
. . . if you have 'kal'?	Turn to **74**
. . . if you have 'basic kal'?	Turn to **145**
. . . otherwise?	Turn to **8**
Look for a storyteller (you must have 'kal' or 'basic kal')?	Turn to **323**
Use magehunting methods?	Turn to **373**
Go to the market?	Turn to **267**

If you have somewhere to stay, you may turn to that paragraph. Or, if you know where Mencius is, you may go there now if you wish.

242

The parched land through which you are trudging resembles nowhere you've seen before. Your home was a cool haven of majestic forests, mountains and pastures and, compared to that, this place is hell. If it weren't for the cool water of the nearby river, you feel sure you would die of heat prostration. After several hours, you see smoke rising into the sky from somewhere ahead. Taking advantage of what little cover the terrain affords, you creep up to a small village. The buildings seem to be made of baked mud, and their inhabitants are wearing strange clothes – but they are reassuringly human, and they seem peaceful enough. You enter the village, spreading your arms wide and asking for help. The villagers stare at you in amazement, then start to jabber in a language you have never heard before. Turn to **206**.

243

A crackling tongue of lightning licks along your sword blade. There's a pop from the wizard's pouch, a sharp pain, and the unpleasant smell of singed flesh. Lose 1 point from your STAMINA. If you have reduced the Scintillating Globe to zero STAMINA points, turn to **215**; otherwise, return to **286** and continue the fight.

244

You spend a restful night in Al-Haddar's house. Your STAMINA is restored to its full value (remember, you cannot recover points lost by passing through the magic portal). Next morning you awaken late and realize that it is high time for you to resume your search. If you know where to go, turn to the appropriate paragraph. Otherwise, if you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **205**. If you haven't, mark two crosses, then turn to **241**.

245

As you follow the river, your mind starts trying to catch up with what has happened to you. You notice that even the air smells unusual, and the clamminess of your skin is unnerving. Mencius's spell has obviously propelled you far from the Margrave's domain. You try to remember everything you know about the far-flung reaches of the world. Unfortunately, geography was never your strong suit. Beyond some lurid tales of the hot southlands, where men's skin is bright red and the earth is yellow, you are at a loss. If you have a Book of Craft, turn to **110**. Otherwise, turn to **18**.

246

With another flash the Genie reappears and, seconds later, Al-Bakbuk is attired in finery fit for a king and his home is filled with jewellery and carpets of the most exquisite quality. Add 1 to your LUCK score. Now, will you summon the Genie to take you to Reinhardt (turn to **342**), or summon the Genie to take you to Kallamehr (turn to **147**)?

247

To kill him, you will have to wet your sword with his blood and strike his head from his body. Keeping your eyes on the stunned mage, you slide your sword along the floor to the puddle of blood which dripped from Mencius's wound. Then you swing the sword back, preparing to make a final swing. At the last moment, Mencius's eyes snap open. Your sword curves around. Mencius shoots straight up in the air, letting out the cry of the damned as your blade cuts into his foot. But he is still alive, and his power has grown beyond anything you could have imagined. Summoning an enormous ball of tiny, writhing flames, he rains destruction down upon you. Your adventure ends here.

248

The market contains many things which may be of use to you. However, prices here are outrageous. You may buy items only if you have enough money – if you do, cross it off your *Adventure Sheet*. If you have some jewellery, you may use it to buy any *one* article. Cross it off your *Adventure Sheet* if you use it in this way.

You may buy more than one of any item if you wish. You may also buy things and give them to a companion, if you have one. Ten Silver Pieces (sp) are worth one Gold Piece (gp).

Candles, 12	1sp
Cloak, fine silk	18gp
Clothing, undyed	2gp
Dagger	1gp
Gloves, leather	4gp
Lantern	3gp
Mirror, small	5sp
Provisions (each meal)	5sp
Rope, hemp, 10 metres	7gp
Sword (heavy, wide and curved)	40gp

If you have a crystal goblet, you can offer it in exchange for one item. If you do this, turn to **272**. Once you have made your purchases, if you have 'Kurt' written down on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **304**. If you have a ruby ring, turn to **130**. Otherwise, continue your search by turning to **198**.

249

You can take the highwayman's horse. If Reinhardt is dead, you can retrieve all the possessions from his body (in addition, you can find the key from Mencius's shackles – note the shackles key on your *Adventure Sheet*). Otherwise, he too can take a horse. On the bodies of the highwaymen you find 47 gold pieces. With the help of the horses you make good time along the road. A few hours after your encounter, you arrive at the coastal city of Kallamehr, passing through an imposing gate. Turn to **100**.

250

It's hard work climbing up the mountainside in the punishing heat of the sun, but eventually you make it. This hill is prominent and, despite the heat haze, you can see for many kilometres. Your eyes follow the silver ribbon of the river at whose banks you arrived. It is joined by several mountain streams and, some way off, it passes through a town. You can't make out people at this distance, but there are definitely buildings of some kind. On the distant horizon a glimmer betokens the sea, or perhaps a mighty river or lake. As your eye follows it around you realize that it must be the sea. You can make out a dark area there which may be a city. Turning around further, you look down at a range of low hills. Only a few kilometres distant, you see a thin plume of smoke. Do you:

Climb back down to the river and follow it downstream?	Turn to **195**
Head for the coast and the city?	Turn to **374**
Make your way towards the plume of smoke?	Turn to **58**

251

You are sick with vertigo, gripped firmly in its claws. After flying for some minutes, you observe another flying creature approaching rapidly. As it nears, you see that it is a flying serpent, with a body of iridescent scales, borne aloft by wings of gauzy membrane.

Clearly, it is the enemy of the bird carrying you, and it swoops to attack.

	SKILL	STAMINA
BIRD of PRODIGIOUS SIZE	7	(current)
WINGED SERPENT	8	9

Work out the battle between the two creatures. However, the bird's grip on you loosens sufficiently for you to be able to attack one or the other each round, if you wish. Roll for your own Attack Strength. If it is higher than your opponent's Attack Strength, you injure it as usual. If it is less than or equal to the opponent's Attack Strength, you suffer no wound. However, each Attack Round you should roll one dice and consult the following table:

Result	*Effect*
1–3	No effect.
4–5	A stray blow strikes you – lose 1 point from your STAMINA.
6	The bird lets go of you – turn to **60**.

If the bird loses the fight, turn to **60**. If the serpent loses the fight, turn to **120**.

252

The Genie of the Ring appears before you. At your command, he produces for you any of the items available in the market (you may refer back to the list in paragraph **267** if you wish). Then, announcing that this was your last wish, he disappears, taking your ring with him (cross the ruby ring off your *Adventure Sheet*). Mark a cross on it and turn to **241**.

253

The wizard's gesture arouseseyour suspicions, so you back out of the cave quickly. No magical bolts emerge to strike you, fortunately. You hurry away from the valley, glad to be out of danger. You are tired and hungry, however. You decide to rest near a thick, prickly bush. As you sit down, you feel something hard in your pocket. It's a five-sided coin, apparently made of gold, with strange symbols covering both sides. How did it get there? Was it the wizard's doing? Note down 'gold hex' on your *Adventure Sheet*. Add 1 point to your LUCK score and turn to **118**.

254

'You leap forward and slice the serpent in twain. Then a screech comes from over your head. You look up to see a black shape hurtling down at you . . .' Turn to **151**.

255

You try to impress on Al-Bakbuk the importance of your mission and finally, reluctantly, he accepts that you must leave. He presents you with a parting gift of a glass (note down 'Al-Bakbuk's glass' on your *Adventure Sheet*) and advises you, if you are ever in the city of Kallamehr, to seek out his brother, the storyteller Al-Haddar. Now will you:

Go shopping?	Turn to **248**
Try to pick up the trail?	Turn to **130**
Head for the city of Kallamehr?	Turn to **348**

256

You mention the name of Al-Fakik to several passers-by and, having obtained directions from an old woman, you finally arrive at a ramshackle hut in the docks region. This is hardly the safest district you have ever visited, nor does Al-Fakik's dwelling inspire much confidence. There's no door, so you push aside the drape in the entrance and peer in. Your eyes take a short while to accustom themselves to the darkness. When they do, you find your gaze returned by someone with a fat face and hair sticking out at improbable angles.

'What do you want, then?' a peremptory voice demands. Will you:

Tell Al-Fakik his brother sent you?	Turn to **112**
Tell him about your search?	Turn to **83**
Ask him for a story?	Turn to **301**

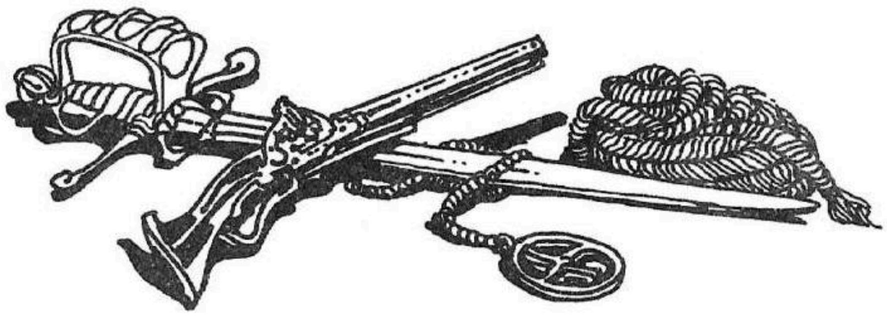
257

Green smoke seeps from the ground. You start to spin, but somehow your eyes remain focused on the ground at your feet. The stone splits open; a crack yawns before you. You move towards it and fall headlong into darkness. Seconds pass and lengthen into minutes. Time has no meaning in this blackness.

Then light bursts upon your eyes. You are standing on a mountain ledge. You feel weary, unnaturally tired. The weight of years seems to have settled on your shoulders. You have been aged ten years by sorcery (reduce your *Initial* SKILL by 2 and your *Initial*

STAMINA by 4). Lying on the ledge before you is the crumpled body of Mencius. Dead eyes stare up at you from a head on which the hair is streaked with grey. Blood oozes from a savage wound in his stomach. There is no sign of Reinhardt, but near the body you find a key – the key to Mencius's shackles (add it to your Equipment List). Before you search for him you must dispose of the mage's body. Do you:

Bury it?	Turn to **146**
Burn it?	Turn to **9**
Throw it in the river?	Turn to **358**



258

Having disposed of the Skulker, you spend a precious moment ridding him of his large cloak (note it down on your *Adventure Sheet*), before setting off after the other two. Unfortunately it's dark, and you lost sight of them while still embroiled in the fight. You dash around, trying to find some sign of them, but in vain. Finally you sink to the ground, exhausted, and drift into sleep. Turn to **142**.

259

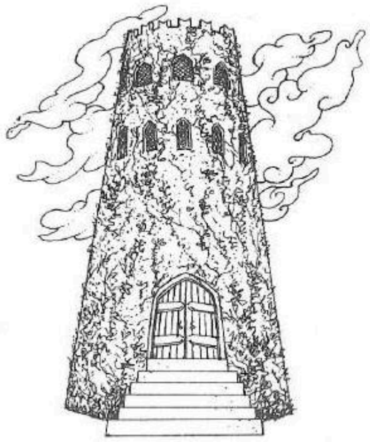
You soon discover that it's almost entirely impossible to communicate with these people – they simply can't understand a word you say. If you decide to get more accustomed to the town, turn to **189** if you have already been to the tavern or to **293** if you haven't. Otherwise, you can try to track Mencius by drawing a Holy Symbol (turn to **78**) or by using a dog (turn to **35**).

260

All feeling disappears, first from your limbs, then from your body. Is this death? A memory is nagging at you, but you cannot place it . . . until light bursts upon your eyes – torchlight. You are in a cell. A crack sunders the floor. Somehow you have returned to the Margrave's castle, but it is a hollow victory: you have defeated your greatest enemy, but at the cost of Reinhardt, the son of your greatest ally, and your rightful lord. If only you could have found some way of keeping him from dying . . .

261

Note down the number '319'. From now on, whenever you make a cross on your *Adventure Sheet*, mark a circle as well. When you have four circles, you can turn to **319**. For now, mark a cross (and a circle) then turn to **241**.



262

Your eyelids start to feel heavy, and your head droops on to your shoulder . . .

You wake to find yourself lying on a comfortable bed, staring up into the wizard's brown eyes. 'Forgive me for hypnotizing you,' he says. 'It was necessary in order to cast the spell which places our language in your mind.' You start to reply, then realize the implications of what he has said. Note down the word 'kal' on your *Adventure Sheet* (if you already have 'basic kal', erase 'basic'). He continues, 'I have also learnt something which may be of use to you. The foe you pursued through the dimensional portal into our land has eluded you. The corpse you left back at the river was that of your lord – by switching bodies, the Chaos Mage Mencius has escaped. His power is such that I can sense his presence in this land – and day by day he is growing stronger!' This news is terrifying.

You have never heard the term 'Chaos Mage', but you sense that the man to whom you are speaking is of a different kind from those you have dedicated your life to exterminating. He holds up the ruby ring you found earlier. 'I took the liberty of removing this from you – it is a Trickster item which could cause you much harm.' Cross the ruby ring off your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **48**.

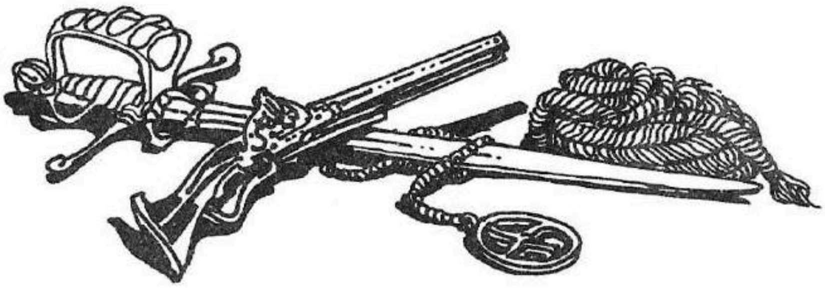
263

Apart from the lingering heat, this is no worse than many other places where you have had to sleep rough in your travels. You find a reasonably sheltered spot and make a small fire. You fall asleep, staring up at the night sky, hunting in vain for some comfortingly familiar pattern of stars. Next morning you are up at dawn. Turn to **285**.

264

You climb over the dunes to a sandy beach. Gulls are wheeling in the sky and waves roll lazily up the sand. Some distance away to your left, two long strands of dune grass wave lazily atop a low hillock, close to the water's edge. Will you:

Head along the coast to your left?	Turn to **90**
Approach the dune?	Turn to **314**
Make your way along the coast to your right?	Turn to **220**



265

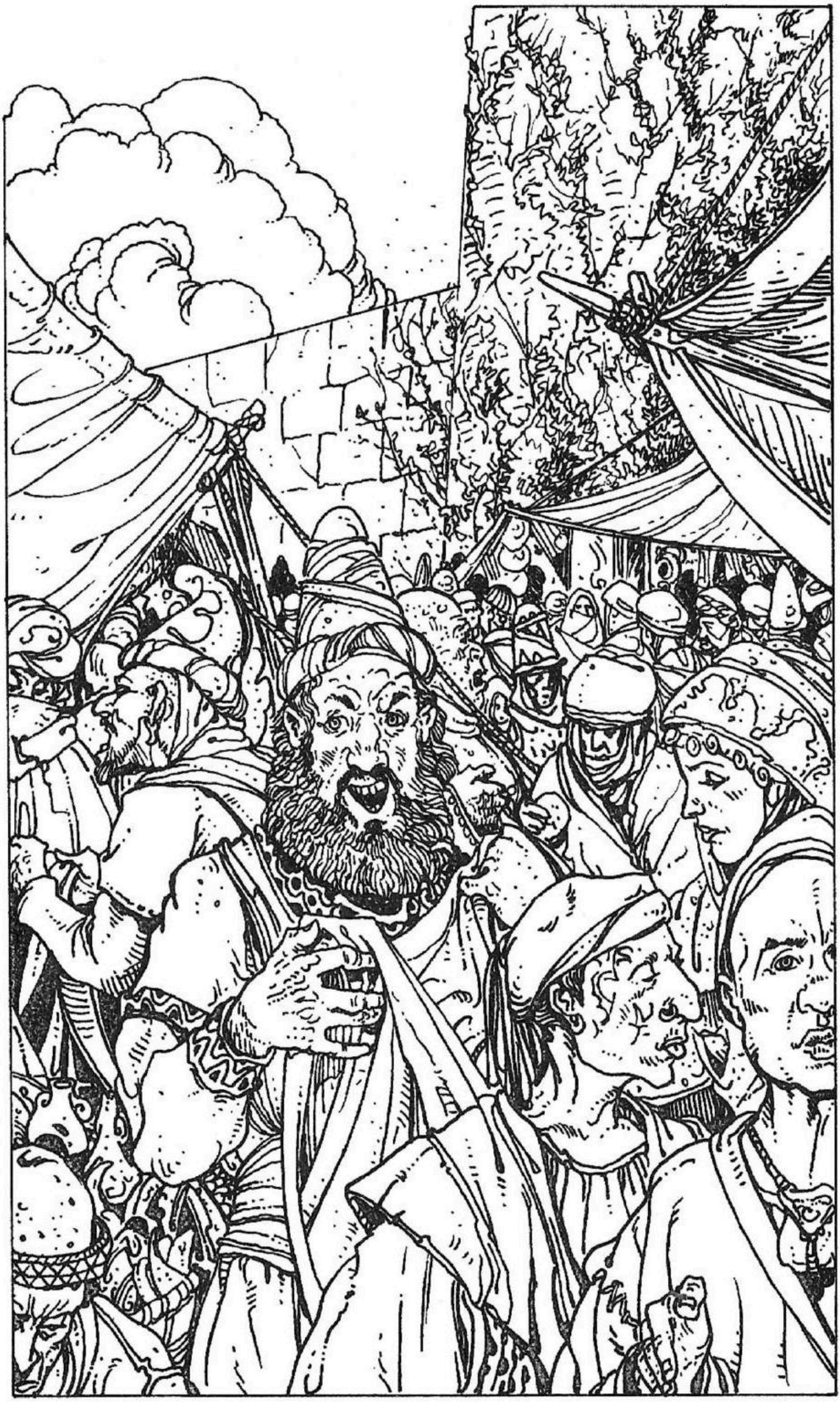
Reinhardt, who hung back with his usual cowardice while you were in danger, now suggests the idea of scratching drawings on the wall of the cave. While you hold the sorcerer, he scratches away, and the wizard soon picks up the idea. Reinhardt's picture of Mencius (or, rather, your old body!) is none too flattering, yet it's accurate enough. It elicits no response from the wizard. Further attempts at depicting the Margrave's castle and the pine-clad hills of your homeland prompt nothing more than puzzlement and shrugged shoulders. Finally a crude representation of a town yields a nod from the sorcerer. He gestures with his hands in a direction which you would guess to be south-west.

Without knowing his language, there's no more you can get out of the wizard. Will you now:

Kill him?	Turn to **299**
Leave him bound?	Turn to **24**
Free him?	Turn to **203**

266

'Catch the treacherous rogue who brought me here! I want him flayed alive – you hear me? Flayed alive!' Reinhardt has lost little of his arrogance, it seems. He appears to have learnt no humility, despite the fact that it was his foolishness which caused this mess in the first place. Luckily, Khasim seems more concerned with your wound. Brushing aside Reinhardt's blustering, he takes a tiny jar of powder out of a small pouch, recites a short chant, and places his hand on your stomach. A wave of well-being comes over you. For the first time since you switched bodies with Reinhardt, the pain from your bullet wound completely disappears. In the Companion box of your *Adventure Sheet*, erase any current entries for STAMINA and SKILL and enter the values SKILL 6, STAMINA 12. Also erase the 'Shauca Scar', if you have it on your *Adventure Sheet*. Turn to **61**.



267

Kallamehr's marketplace is full of aggressive traders, desperate to foist their wares off on you. You can find anything you want, but obtaining it quickly is another matter. You also start to grow a little suspicious of the quality of some of the wares on sale. You can also try to obtain money by selling any precious objects you may have acquired. However, you realize that you are not going to get the best price here. You are looking for a quick sale and haggling with masters of their craft. Note that 10 Silver Pieces (sp) are worth 1 Gold Piece (gp).

To Buy	
Candles, 12	1sp
Backpack	1gp
Cloak, fine silk	10gp
Clothing, undyed	4gp
Dagger	1gp
Gloves, leather	3gp
Horse	40gp
Lantern	2gp
Mirror, small	5sp
Provisions (each meal)	8sp
Rope, hemp, 10 metres	7gp
Sword, (heavy and curved)	30gp

To Sell	
A horse	20gp
A ruby ring	20gp
A Gold Hex	5sp
A shauca claw	3gp
A vizier's robe	40gp
Al-Bakbuk's glass	1gp
A crystal goblet	5gp
A diamond	100gp
Jewellery (per piece) (roll one dice then multiply result by 10)	10–60 gp
A magic amulet	10gp
A serrated knife	1gp
A lapis lazuli brooch	5gp

If you have a dog and wish to obtain goat meat, turn to **106**. If you possess a ruby ring, and you know its secret, you may use it. When you have bought all you need, mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **241**.

268

You had taken care to load the pistol while the battle was raging, so now you simply have to aim and shoot. Your aim is true: the bullet strikes Mencius full in the forehead. Even his sorcerous power cannot heal such a wound. You watch as realization enters his dying eyes. His mouth moves, but the world is spared his dying words. He crumples. You look in triumph at his dead body, reflecting that it would have been good if you could have kept the body for its true owner. Then the scene before you is swallowed by absolute blackness. Check your *Adventure Sheet*. If you have a shackles key or the word 'lost', turn to **260**. Otherwise, turn to **101**.

269

'Mencius! Mencius! Mencius!' you shout. The old man cowers in fear, but he seems to understand you all right. 'Kallamehr,' he says, pointing in a direction you judge to be the south-west. If you tie him up before leaving, turn to **24**. If you thank him for his help, turn to **127**.

270

The Skeletons press in on you relentlessly, blades whirling. You manage to hack down a couple of them, but the end is inevitable. From the chamber above a mocking laugh echoes down to you. It is your enemy, celebrating the defeat of his greatest foe. Now his evil will spread unchallenged. Your story ends here.

271

You close your eyes tight to try to rid yourself of the uncomfortable feeling, and after a while it clears. You rest for another few minutes, then continue. Turn to **388**.

272

You complete the transaction and make your way out of the market. Suddenly you are seized from all sides. The merchant holds up the crystal goblet, and the sharp-eyed fellow with the donkey points at you and nods. You are held fast. After a bewildering sequence of incomprehensible meetings and arguments, a large, bald, sword-wielding muscleman appears, stripped to the waist. Your arm is tied to a wooden frame and you watch in helpless horror as the swordsman raises his sword high above his head and brings it down. Instantly, agony shoots from your arm all through your body. The world starts to swim around you and, mercifully, you faint. When you awaken, the horror of your situation dawns on you. You are a cripple in a strange land. Soon after the loss of your hand you go down with brain fever, which incapacitates you for weeks on end. By the time you recover it is too late – Mencius has seized control of Kallamehr, his power growing stronger by the day. Your career as a magehunter ends in abject failure.

273

The tunnel continues past a row of doors with barred openings. The doors are all locked shut. You peer into the first but can make nothing out. You carry on along the tunnel; turn to **179**.

274

Too late, you think of Reinhardt. He is not with you now, so you can only assume that he has been killed by the shaggy creature. Now all you can hope to do is bring Mencius to justice. You dab at the cut, opened by the monster's blow. It's painful, but you've suffered worse (note down Shauca Scar on your *Adventure Sheet*). Turn to **377**.

275

You open the box gingerly. Inside is your pistol, box of powder, and a lead bullet (note them on your *Adventure Sheet*). 'I will see you again,' says Mencius, 'but for now I had better hurry back to my tower.' So saying, he hurries off. If you follow him, turn to **312**. Otherwise, turn to **241**.

276

You concentrate hard, staring into Reinhardt's eyes. Nothing happens. You take his hand and try again. Still there is no result. Whatever spell caused you to switch bodies, it's not that easily reversed. Turn to **175**.

277

You found no food on the way to the mountains – there is none on the way back. You soon lose the strength to walk, sinking to the unforgiving ground. You die here, unmourned, food for carrion.

278

Unfortunately you're no mountaineer. After descending a mere fifty metres, a piece of rock shifts under your feet; caught off balance, you claw desperately at the rock face, but in vain. As you fall, the mountain face rushes past your wildly twisting body, and the pain of pressure builds in your chest. The ground rushes up towards you . . . Turn to **214**.

279

The courtiers drag you along a number of corridors and down flights of stairs, finally depositing you in a tiny, lightless cell. Here you languish for several days, wondering whether you will ever see sunlight again. Finally guards drag you from your cell and throw you out of the palace gates. If you have the word 'early' on your *Adventure Sheet*, cross it off. If you left a human companion outside the palace, there is now no sign of him – note down the word 'missing' on your *Adventure Sheet*. However, if you left Kurt here, he runs up to you, apparently none the worse for a few days alone in the city. If you now have one or more crosses on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **241**; otherwise, turn to **100**.

280

Your first attempt is no more than a croak but, as panic takes hold, you fill your lungs and let rip. You shout until you are hoarse, all the time feeling the poison creeping through your body. Luckily you are not moving, so its painful progress is slow. As dizziness grips you and your vision fades, you think you see an old man wearing some sort of green cloth wrapped round his head as a strange hat. Then you sink into a fuzzy world of pain . . . Turn to **341**.

281

You creep warily down the tunnel. A faint luminescence comes from the walls, and you can barely make out the way ahead. After several metres the tunnel opens up a little. A dark figure, sitting against the wall, leaps up as you draw near and challenges you in a language of unearthly resonance. The figure carries a sword with an ugly-looking serrated blade.

DWELLER IN THE DARK SKILL 8 STAMINA 7

You must fight with your Attack Strength reduced by 2 points because of the darkness. If you win, turn to **173**.

282

'Transformed into a large raven, Al-Azrad took to the skies. Jaddar was furious: his enemy had escaped him once more. But he was famous for his determination. Making careful note of the direction in which the raven flew, he pressed on through the forest. Soon after leaving the trees, he came upon a small hut in front of which sat a hunchback. This twisted fellow nevertheless greeted him heartily and, in answer to Jaddar's questions, replied that he had seen a raven flying north, towards the Omnipresent Tower. Jaddar, seeking to learn more about the Tower, received in answer from the hunchback the following tale:

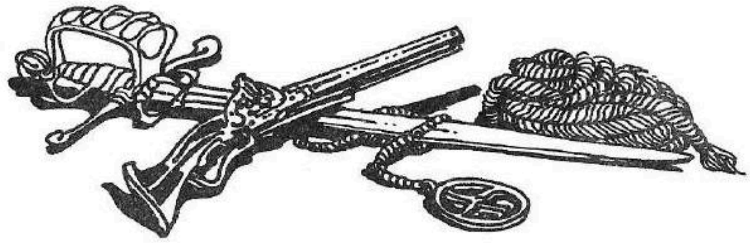
'"There was once a foolish prince who befriended a wicked man. Even though he knew the man was an unbeliever who practised the black arts, the prince often enjoyed his company. Finally the scoundrel was arrested by one of the king's officers, and locked up in a dungeon. The prince, worried that the wicked man might tell of their association, implicating him in his crimes, went down to the dungeons. What plan was forming in his reckless young mind?"' If you think that the prince killed the wicked man, turn to **316**. If you think he freed him, turn to **122**.

283

You haven't walked far before Reinhardt collapses, complaining that he tripped because of the wretched body he now inhabits, so you agree to a brief rest. Five minutes later, a slight dizziness overcomes you and your scalp prickles. *Test your Luck.* If you are Lucky, turn to **296**. If you are Unlucky, turn to **128**.

284

The officials at the palace are quite talkative and they ask you many questions, which you deflect skilfully. In response to your questions, you learn that they know of no other foreigners like yourself in the city. There are quite a number of wizards, they say, but none which poses a threat to the security of the city. Mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **241**.



285

After an hour or so's walking next day, your nose picks up the faintest trace of salt-spray – you must be near the sea! At the top of a low rise you can make out some ruins, which on closer inspection resemble some of the old ruins of your homeland. Wandering among them, you are surprised by a creature as strange as any you've seen summoned by your sorcerous enemies. It is fully six metres in length, with a golden body and the head of a lion, but sprouting a pair of wings. As you start in surprise, the thing grunts at you, its voice surprisingly reminiscent of a human's. If you attack the creature, turn to **38**. If you treat the thing with respect, turn to **144**. If you hold your ground warily, your weapon in hand, turn to **375**.

286

You awaken late: the sun is up and shining down on you brightly. And yet . . . a sixth sense is telling you that something is not quite right. Something else woke you . . . something close . . . something strange. There it is! A dancing ball of pale light, floating in the air. Fascinated, you watch it approach. Tiny bolts, like lightning, start to spit from the ball. Suddenly it darts towards you. You barely have a chance to ready yourself.

SCINTILLATING GLOBE SKILL 9 STAMINA 6

If you make a successful attack on the globe, turn to **346**. If your STAMINA is reduced to 2 or less by the globe, turn to **34**.

287

You return along the beach as far as the body of the Giant Crab. Approaching it, you get the eerie feeling that it is moving. Then you realize that the crab is indeed dead but is covered with slithering, translucent shapes. Apparently devoid of sense-organs, these jelly-like eels nevertheless are clearly aware of your presence. They slither across the sand, cutting off your retreat. Close up, they possess no distinguishing features – they are just metre-long, worm-like lumps of sentient gristle. You will have to fight your way through ten of them to make your escape. Fight them one at a time.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First JELLYWORM	4	2
Second JELLYWORM	3	3
Third JELLYWORM	4	2
Fourth JELLYWORM	4	3
Fifth JELLYWORM	3	2
Sixth JELLYWORM	4	2
Seventh JELLYWORM	4	2
Eighth JELLYWORM	4	3
Ninth JELLYWORM	3	2
Tenth JELLYWORM	4	2

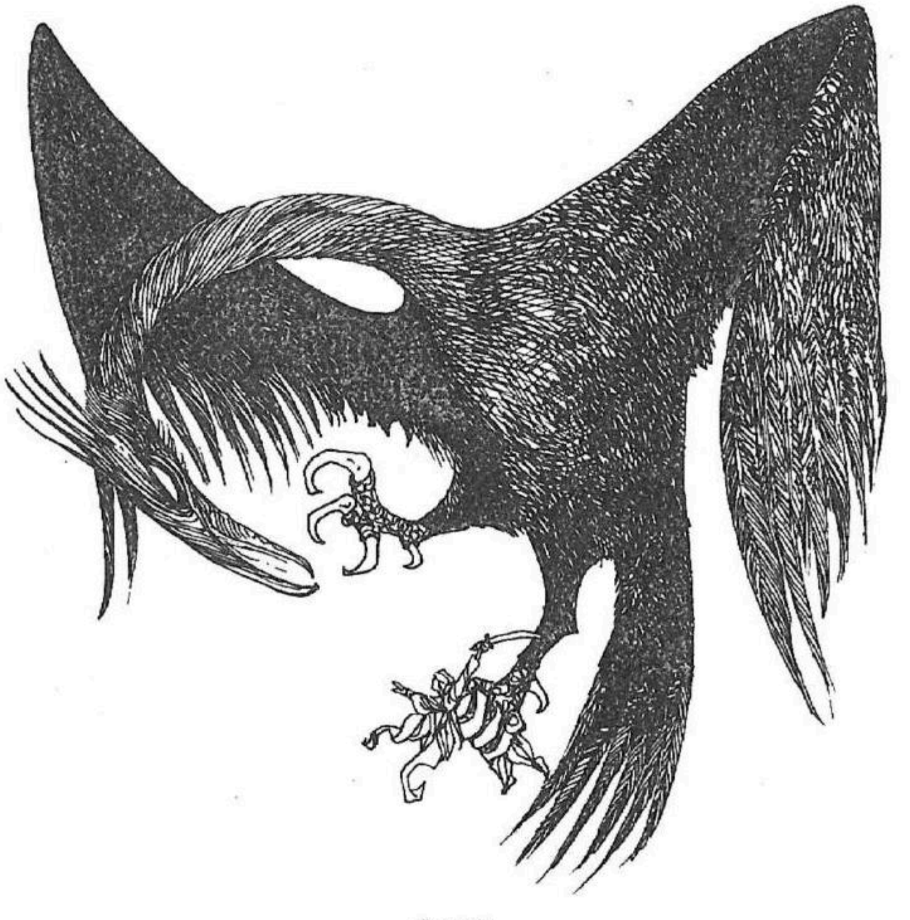
If you win through, you escape along the beach. Turn to **220**.

288

You charge out of the cave and into the valley. If you have a shackles key, turn to **123**. Otherwise, turn to **366**.

289

The blast strikes you head on, flinging you backwards. Lose 1 point from your STAMINA. Khasim's magic amulet has protected you from the full force of the blast. Seizing the opportunity, you dash forward, colouring your weapon with the splash of blood which fell from Mencius's brow. Mencius shrieks once more and prepares to release another blast. But you are on him first. If you have the Book of Craft, turn to **29**; otherwise, turn to **331**.



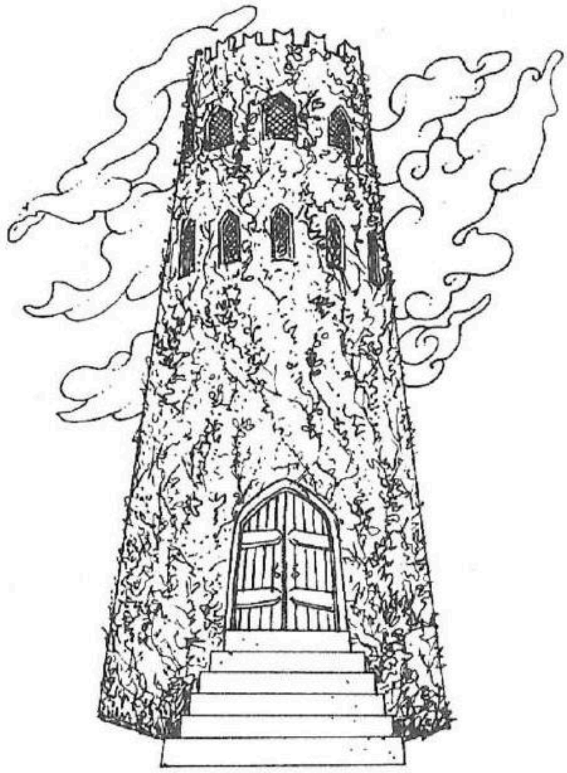
290

You make a dive for Mencius, but the crack in the floor widens and an unearthly force sucks you towards it. You hover on the brink as Mencius plunges down. Then Reinhardt desperately grabs for you. You both fall headlong into blackness. Seconds pass and lengthen into minutes. Time no longer seems to be passing. All around is black. Feeling disappears from your limbs, then from your body. The sensation of falling is gone.

Light bursts upon your eyes like a shaft of ice. You are standing on a mountain ledge. Out of the corner of your eye you see a figure toppling from the ledge. You rush to the edge but are too late – the figure rolls down the scree slope and plunges into a fast-flowing river. You watch for some seconds, but see no sign of him surfacing. A groan from behind brings you spinning around. Mencius is lying in a heap on the ground. His jet-black hair is now streaked with grey and a trickle of blood dampens his brow. If you waste no time in killing him, turn to **20**. If you examine him while he is unconscious, turn to **107**. If you bring him round, turn to **363**.

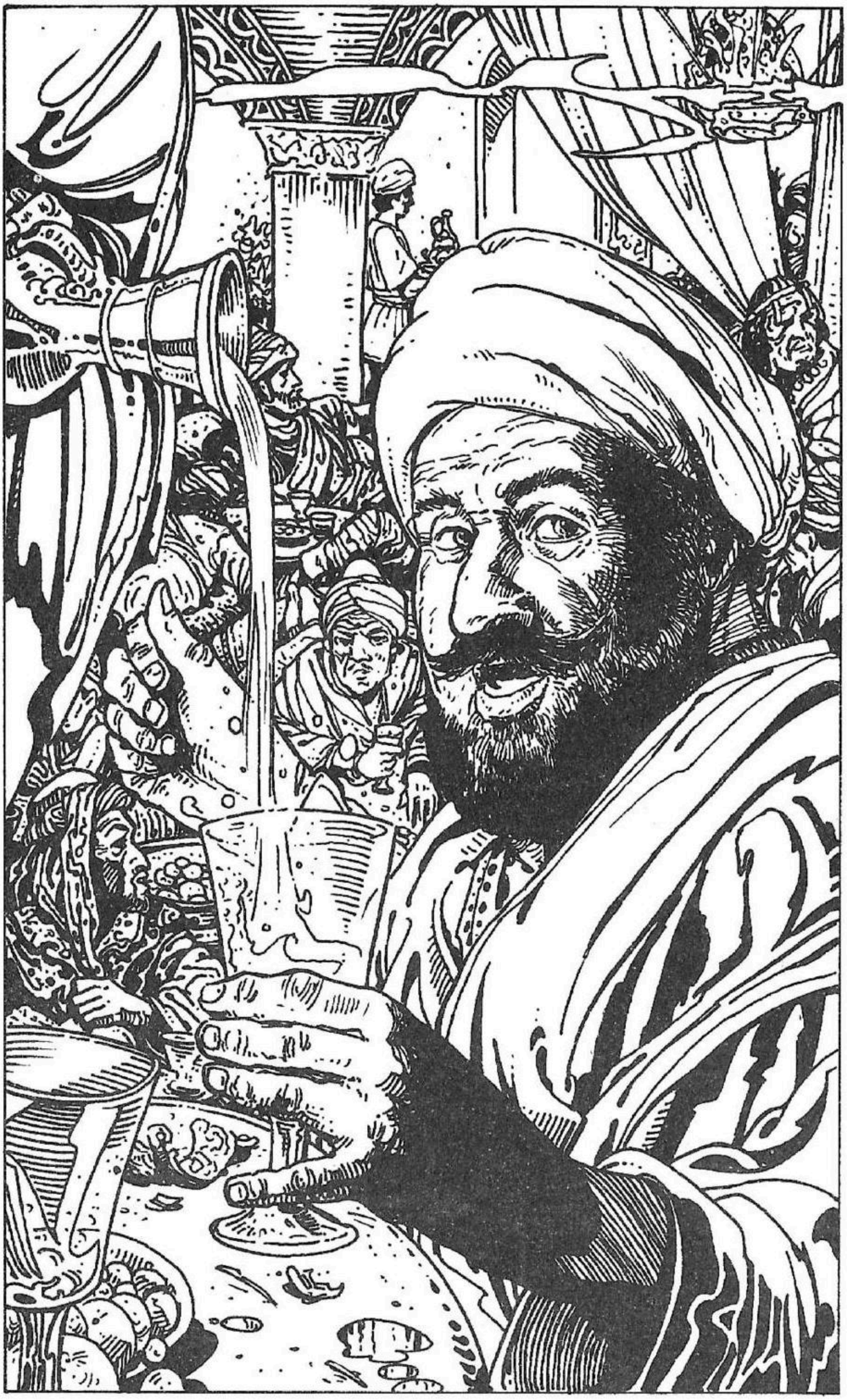
291

The crazy figure shrugs and disappears from view. Moments later, the ship moves away, and you are left alone on the ledge. Turn to **365**.



292

The courtiers block off your route to the door, so you can see only one avenue of escape: the intricately latticed window. You charge at it, smashing it and sailing through the air, to splash in an ornamental pond below. Lose 1 point from your STAMINA. Before the alarm can be raised, you sprint across the courtyard and out through the palace gate, under the noses of the surprised guards. If you have a companion or Kurt, you quickly meet up with them and disappear into the back streets. Note down the word 'bath' on your *Adventure Sheet*. If you have one or more crosses on your *Sheet*, turn to **241**; otherwise, turn to **100**.



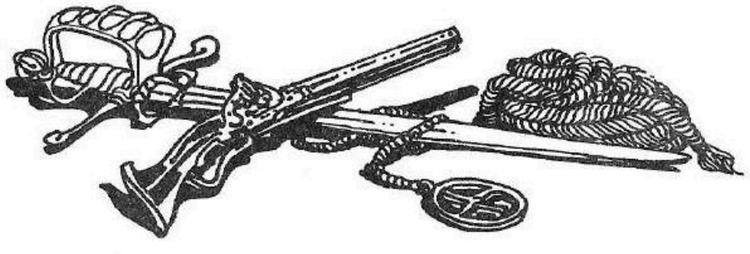
293

There must be a tavern of some kind round here, but can you recognize it? In your land, taverns advertise their trade with signs – often pictures of a pitcher brimful of beer. There are no such signs here, however. Finally you see a man staggering out of an ornate stone building with the unmistakable swagger of a drunkard. You hurry in, to view the strangest bar scene you've ever beheld. The customers are seated on rugs, being served by scantily clad men and women. They are drinking their brew from cut glass. As you enter, their eyes all turn to you, and the room grows hushed. For a moment panic grips you, but then the conversation resumes. You sigh in relief, remembering countless similar experiences in country taverns of your homeland. You take a seat and are quickly befriended by a huge, bearded local. He seems unworried at your lack of language ability and starts to teach you some of the basic words, clicking his fingers at frequent intervals to replenish both his glass and the one he provides for you. It's not beer, but a sweet, light wine which does wonders for your exhaustion.

What is your plan now? If you or a companion have a bullet wound and wish to visit a doctor, turn to **2**. If you have a Shauca Claw, turn to **210**. If you want to concentrate on acquiring some knowledge of the language, turn to **55**. If food is your main need, turn to **89**. Or you may prefer to buy some other essential supplies; turn to **248**.

294

'So finally the snake lay dead. Jaddar cut off its head and put it in his pouch, then turned his head homeward. Three days and three nights he travelled, full of joy that once again he would see the city he loved. On the fourth day, however, he saw a dejected figure on the road before him. Approaching closer, he saw it was a vizier who had entertained Jaddar as a guest on many occasions and had supported his cause. The vizier's clothes were torn and dirty and, as soon as he saw Jaddar, he began to wail: "Evil, treachery, blasphemy against the will of Hazah!" Jaddar asked him what was the matter; from him he learned that there was a new Emir in the city, a man of evil moods and doubtful faith. "Oh give me a sword, that I may fight against this injustice!" the vizier pleaded. Jaddar willingly gave him his own sword and, magic bow in hand, accompanied him back to the city. On the way, the vizier told Jaddar a story.' Turn to **371**.



295

The innkeeper wastes no times in argument. Snatching up a butcher's cleaver, he leaps at you.

INCENSED INNKEEPER SKILL 7 STAMINA 9

If you defeat the innkeeper, turn to **117**.

296

Glancing around, you happen to catch Reinhardt's eye. You lock stares, and the dizziness grows stronger. There is a feeling like falling through the air, and you find yourself staring into Reinhardt's eyes – but now Reinhardt is back in his own body! A sharp pain in your stomach confirms that you are now in the body of Mencius! Reinhardt is delighted to be restored to his natural state. In the box marked 'Companion' on your *Adventure Sheet*, write '5' next to SKILL and '8' next to STAMINA. Then tick the box marked 'Switch' in the bottom right-hand corner. This box shows that you have switched bodies with your companion. Unless you switch back, you will use the SKILL and STAMINA scores of your companion. Write any equipment you gain while in this body in the bottom part of the Equipment box, so that you keep track of who has what. You now know how to switch bodies. Whenever your scalp prickles, you can change bodies with Reinhardt or Mencius. You will not be given this as an option, but you may choose to switch anyway. To switch, simply add together the digits of the paragraph you are at, then add the result to the paragraph you are at. For example, if you were at paragraph **283**, you would add the digits (2 + 8 + 3 = 13), then add this total to the paragraph you were at (13 + 283 = 296) and then turn to paragraph **296**. Now that he has his body back, Reinhardt is eager to track Mencius and find a way back to his own land. He drags you to your feet and you set off again. Turn to **245**.

297

With a thunderclap, the Genie appears.

'Kill him!' you shriek, pointing at the gesturing figure. The Genie wastes no time in attacking your enemy, and the two are soon embroiled in an all-out battle – ravening bolts of magical energy repeatedly blast the Genie, who responds with juddering punches against the mage's magical barrier. If you seize the moment to flee, note down the word 'genie' and turn to **376**. If you stay to help, turn to **42**.

298

You steel yourself for the pain but are relieved, if a little surprised, when the physician treats your injury with herbs that sting slightly, then bandages it tightly. In the Companion box of your *Adventure Sheet* erase the STAMINA score and replace it with 10; erase the SKILL score and replace it with 6. Note down the word 'bandage'. You leave the tavern in high spirits – your benefactor insists on returning for another drink or three. That's fine with you, as the tavern is relatively cool. Out in the streets, the sun beats down on your head, making your scalp prickle. Turn to **55**.

299

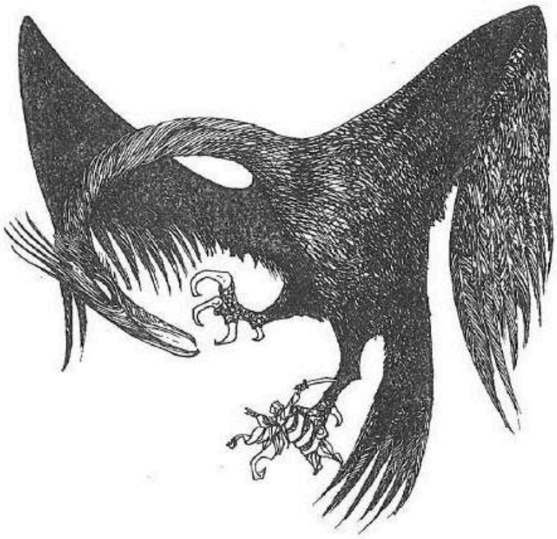
Tugging the rope up round the man's neck, you start to tighten it. He is surprisingly weak and, after a rasping gurgle, goes limp. You continue tightening the rope, just to be on the safe side, then release his pathetic corpse. If you have a Shauca Scar, turn to **125**. Otherwise, turn to **384**.

300

'I can't be bothered to learn your language,' he says, 'so I taught you mine.' Sure enough, you can now understand him perfectly (note down 'kal' on your *Adventure Sheet*). 'I'll probably help you,' he continues, 'as this fellow Mencius is a bit of a nuisance, and you seem to have burst from the same bubble as he.' If you have a ruby ring and a Book of Craft, turn to **207**. If you have just a ruby ring, turn to **50**. If you don't have a ruby ring, turn to **368**.

301

Al-Fakik spits on the rough floor. 'It'll cost you,' he says. 'Two gold in advance.' If you pay him, cross the money off and turn to **39**. If you do not, you can tell him his brother sent you (turn to **112**) or leave him in peace (turn to **205** if you have the word 'trail' written down; otherwise, mark a cross and turn to **241**).



302

After a while you lose sight of the smoke, but you do happen upon a mountain path which seems to be going in the right direction. Turn to **52**.

303

Tick the 'Switch' box on your *Adventure Sheet*. Reinhardt is jubilant to be back in his own body again and lets out a shout of pure joy. Khasim almost falls off the carpet in surprise, but he soon catches on to what has happened. Turn to **93**.

304

You are ready to start tracking Mencius. Kurt seems eager to start, and you have to keep him on a tight leash. You quickly leave the town and head out into the countryside. If you have a wizard's pouch, turn to **97**; otherwise, turn to **176**.

305

What will you do to defend yourself before this apparition completes his spell? Will you:

Shoot him with a pistol and a silver bullet (if you have one)?	Turn to **36**
Strike him with a sword?	Turn to **129**
Attack him with rope of human hair (if you have it)?	Turn to **85**
Toss a gold hex (if you have one)?	Turn to **225**

Or you may use the secret of the ring, if you know it.

306

With a clap of thunder, the mighty Genie appears. He quickly clears a path through the advancing Skeletons to the flight of stairs, scattering their bones like matchsticks. The Skeletons continue to press in, and your enchanted servant finishes the last of them with a broad sweep of his arms. 'Master, that was your last wish! Now I will have my freedom,' the Genie declares, then he disappears. The ruby ring has gone from your finger (erase it from your *Adventure Sheet*). Turn to **392**.

307

The two cloaked figures whom you are not fighting lift Reinhardt's sleeping form and drag him away into the darkness. You are too busy holding off your enemy to do anything about it. Continue fighting the Shrouded Skulker. If you win, turn to **258**.

308

The man, who must be some kind of hermit, ushers you a little way into his cave. He asks if he can help you, to which you reply that you are looking for a sorcerer. 'I am a sorcerer,' he says. If you attack him straight away, turn to the paragraph which contains your method of attack (you must have the appropriate item). Will you:

Strike him with a rapier?	Turn to **237**
Strike him with a broadsword?	Turn to **7**
Urge Kurt to attack him?	Turn to **183**
Bind him with rope of human hair?	Turn to **86**
Shoot him with a pistol?	Turn to **330**

Or, if you choose not to attack him after all, turn to **362**.

309

All feeling disappears, first from your limbs, then from your body. Is this death? A memory is nagging at you, but you cannot place it . . . until light bursts upon your eyes – torchlight. You are in a cell. A crack sunders the floor. Reinhardt is standing by your side. Somehow you have returned to the Margrave's castle. The two of you make your way through its passages. In the Great Hall, you are seized by guards and brought before the chamberlain, who seems to have installed himself as the new Margrave. He eyes you suspiciously. 'Congratulations, magehunter. You have recaptured the mage Mencius, slayer of our beloved former Margrave, Reinhardt. Since it is almost dawn, we will burn him immediately.' Both you and Reinhardt start to protest, but to no avail. After all, Reinhardt *is* in Mencius's body. Your victory over Mencius is hollow – however much you may dislike Reinhardt, he is the son of your greatest ally. You watch him burn, turning over and over in your mind the missed chances that might have kept him alive.

310

Reinhardt screeches with disappointment as you break away; too late, he realizes that he has missed the chance of being reunited with his own body and that, if either of you had wished to make the transfer, it would have happened. You thank your quick wits for working out faster than Reinhardt what was happening, and continue with the divination. At least now you have the encouraging thought that it's possible for you to return to your own body. All you have to do is find and subdue Mencius first! Turn to **32**.

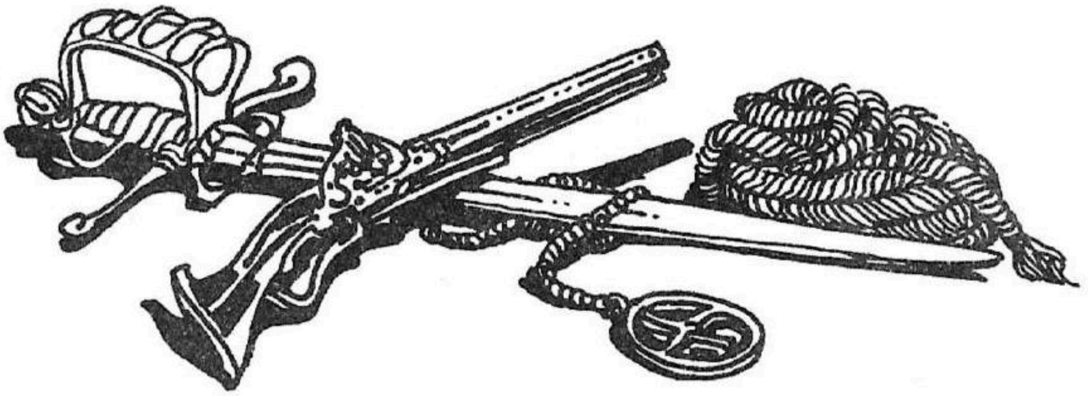
311

In the shadow of a huge pillar you find a wide tunnel leading downwards. You grope your way into the murky interior, stumbling over something. It turns out to be an exquisitely wrought necklace, with a dazzling array of jewels set in gold. (Note down this piece of jewellery on your *Adventure Sheet*.) If you press on into the darkness, in search of more treasure, turn to **14**. If you make your way to the sea, satisfied with your spoils, turn to **264**.

312

The Rangor Tower, overlooking the marketplace: *that* is where your pursuit of Mencius leads. You can see why he would want to make it his lair. As it is built on the very edge of the cliff, it is impossible to fence the mage in with a circle of mirrors. As you stare up at the tower, it seems to exude a quality of permanence, as if

it is somehow more than real. You mount its steps and cautiously push open the brass-studded door. The Great Hall inside is empty. You walk warily across it towards the staircase in the opposite wall, surprised to see that the opulent carpet is covered with tiny bones. You have walked no more than six paces when the trap is sprung. The door slams shut, and a horde of living Skeletons, wielding bright bronze scimitars, arise from the tiny bones. If you have the Book of Craft, turn to **190**. If you have the ring and know its secret, you may use it – unless you have the word 'genie' written down, in which case nothing happens. If you have Kurt, turn to **45**. Otherwise, turn to **270**.



313

You start to draw the Holy Symbol in the sandy soil of the hillside, using Reinhardt's fancy rapier. When it is finished, you pick up a smooth stone and offer up a prayer. For this method to work, you must be completely calm. But a slight dizziness overcomes you; your scalp prickles; your eyes are locked with Reinhardt's. If you break eye-contact and carry on with the ritual, turn to **224**. If you continue staring, turn to **149**.

314

There's something strange about the two strands of grass. As you approach, they wave more excitedly, then point in your direction. Curious, you approach closer – then you notice that on the end of each strand is an eye! The hillock quivers and shakes, and an enormous crab heaves itself out of the sand. With the speed of its spider-like legs it charges at you.

GIANT CRAB	SKILL 9	STAMINA 10

For its first attack only, add 2 to the Giant Crab's Attack Strength. If it succeeds in this attack, it has grasped you in its pincer – you must fight with a temporary reduction of 2 to your Attack Strength until you kill the crab. If you win, turn to **10**.

315

Al-Bakbuk waves goodbye, suggesting that if you are ever in Kallamehr you should seek out his brother, the storyteller Al-Fakik. As a parting gift he gives you a cloth hat (note down 'turban' on your *Adventure Sheet*). Now will you:

Go shopping?	Turn to **248**
Try to pick up the trail?	Turn to **322**
Head for the city of Kallamehr?	Turn to **348**

316

'Sure enough, the prince drew his dagger and plunged it into the wicked man's breast. Then he watched in horror as the wizard's eyes opened wide to stare at him. With a sickening pop, the eyeballs flew out of their sockets, circled the prince's head twice, then flew right into his mouth and down his throat! The wizard's body slumped to the ground, but he was not dead. With his eyes inside the prince, he could take over the prince's body at any time. When the prince became king, a new era of evil fell upon the land, and the blessing of Hazah left its people . . .' Turn to **151**.

317

Your eyes lock with Reinhardt's, and once again you experience the dizziness of body switch (erase the tick from the 'Switch' box on your *Adventure Sheet*). Reinhardt is furious to be back in Mencius's body and immediately starts raging at you. Your drinking companion can't understand what the problem is but waits patiently until you're ready to go on into the tavern. On entering, Reinhardt calms down a little. Turn to **55**.

318

If you have a wizard's pouch, and 'basic kal' is written on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **16**. If you don't have the pouch but do have 'basic kal', turn to **126**. Otherwise, turn to **259**.

319

Finally the week is up. You decide to call your dog Kurt, after an uncle of yours whom he resembles. Note down 'Kurt' on your *Adventure Sheet* and erase the circles. If you know where Mencius is, you may go there now. Otherwise, turn to **241**.

320

With the new Margrave gone, the castle is in uproar. Reinhardt was Mechtner's only child and no one knows which of the many distant relatives is next in line. Several retainers try to take command, and factions emerge. Ignoring the developing power struggle, you set your mind to the task of recovering Reinhardt and recapturing Mencius. Helping yourself to a horse from the stables, you ride out to the ruined monastery in which Mencius had been hiding when you tracked him down. A thorough search uncovers a spell book, written in the Old Language but comprehensible to you (note down the Book of Craft on your *Adventure Sheet*). You have devoted your life to stamping out sorcery but now, it seems, you must learn some. For a week you study the book, until finally you discover the spell Mencius must have used to escape from the cell. According to the book, it creates a 'nexus', a gateway between 'realms of existence'. It is a very dangerous spell, and moreover it adds ten years to the age of the wizard who casts it. Nevertheless, it seems that the only way for you to follow Mencius will be to try to cast the spell. If you make the attempt, roll one die. On a roll of 1 or 2, turn to **257**. On a 3 or 4, turn to **43**. On a 5 or 6, turn to **113**. If you decide not to cast the spell, preferring to wait and see if Mencius returns, turn to **347**.

321

As you slump to the ground, Reinhardt cries out; he clutches at his stomach and moans. In the evening gloom, his face seems to be the colour of whey. You try to sleep, but Reinhardt's moaning keeps you awake. Finally it stops, and you slide into unconsciousness.

Next morning, Reinhardt is dead. You check his clothing and are surprised to find the key that he had used to free Mencius from his shackles. For some reason – perhaps guilt – he had been carrying the instrument by which he brought about his own downfall (note down the shackles key on your *Adventure Sheet*). You dig a shallow grave for his body and say a brief prayer. Turn to **285**.

322

If you have a ruby ring, turn to **130**. Otherwise, turn to **198**.

323

You should only seek out a storyteller you have not met before. Which storyteller will you look for:

Al-Fakik?	Turn to **256**
Al-Haddar?	Turn to **182**
Al-Nashshar?	Turn to **31**

Or, if you will settle for the first one you run into, turn to **119**.

324

Your eyelids start to feel heavy and your head presses on your neck like a lead ball . . . you are falling asleep. If you wish to resist the spell, roll three dice. If the result is less than, or equal to, your STAMINA, turn to **171**. If the result is greater than your STAMINA, or if you don't wish to resist the spell, turn to **341**.

325

With a jolt, you realize that you are back in your own body. Your SKILL and STAMINA scores are returned to their *Initial* values. However, *all* your possessions have gone. Erase all possessions, and in their place write down the following: red clothing, pistol, box of powder, one lead bullet, 25 Gold Pieces, 2 Provisions. Note the words 'home' and 'early'. If you previously had a shackles key, note the word 'lost'. The woman you are facing seems to be accusing you of something, though you can't be sure exactly what. Still, it seems best to apologize profusely and hope that she will let you off. Since sideways glances reveal huge, muscle-bound men waiting on either side of you and eyeing you with undisguised contempt, you prostrate yourself, explaining in your limited language that you are a mere foreigner, ignorant of this land and its customs. She waves her hand imperiously. Turn to **148**.

326

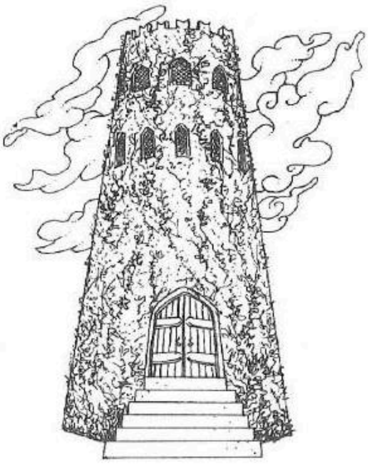
The vizier thanks you for your assistance. 'I go now to try to free the city. May Hazah be with you in your battle.' So saying, he strides off, leaving you to face the Omnipresent Tower. Turn to **361**.

327

Assuming that the word of a sorcerer is inherently untrustworthy, you decide that it's better to go in the opposite direction. Accordingly, you set your sights northward and hurry away from the cool valley. Turn to **357**.

328

The figure chuckles to himself, then pulls the plank back. If you have a ruby ring, turn to **46**. Otherwise, if you have a pistol you may prime it (note what kind of bullet you are loading – you may shoot the diamond you found, if you like) and shoot the figure (turn to **111**); or you can jump over to the ship (turn to **239**) or wait where you are (turn to **291**).



329

Either passage seems as good as the other, so you hurry along the left-hand tunnel. After a few metres you are startled by a sudden movement close by. Turning, you see a hidden alcove in which are two more Dwellers in Darkness, their weapons at the ready. You have no chance to defend yourself. Taken by surprise, your adventure ends here.

330

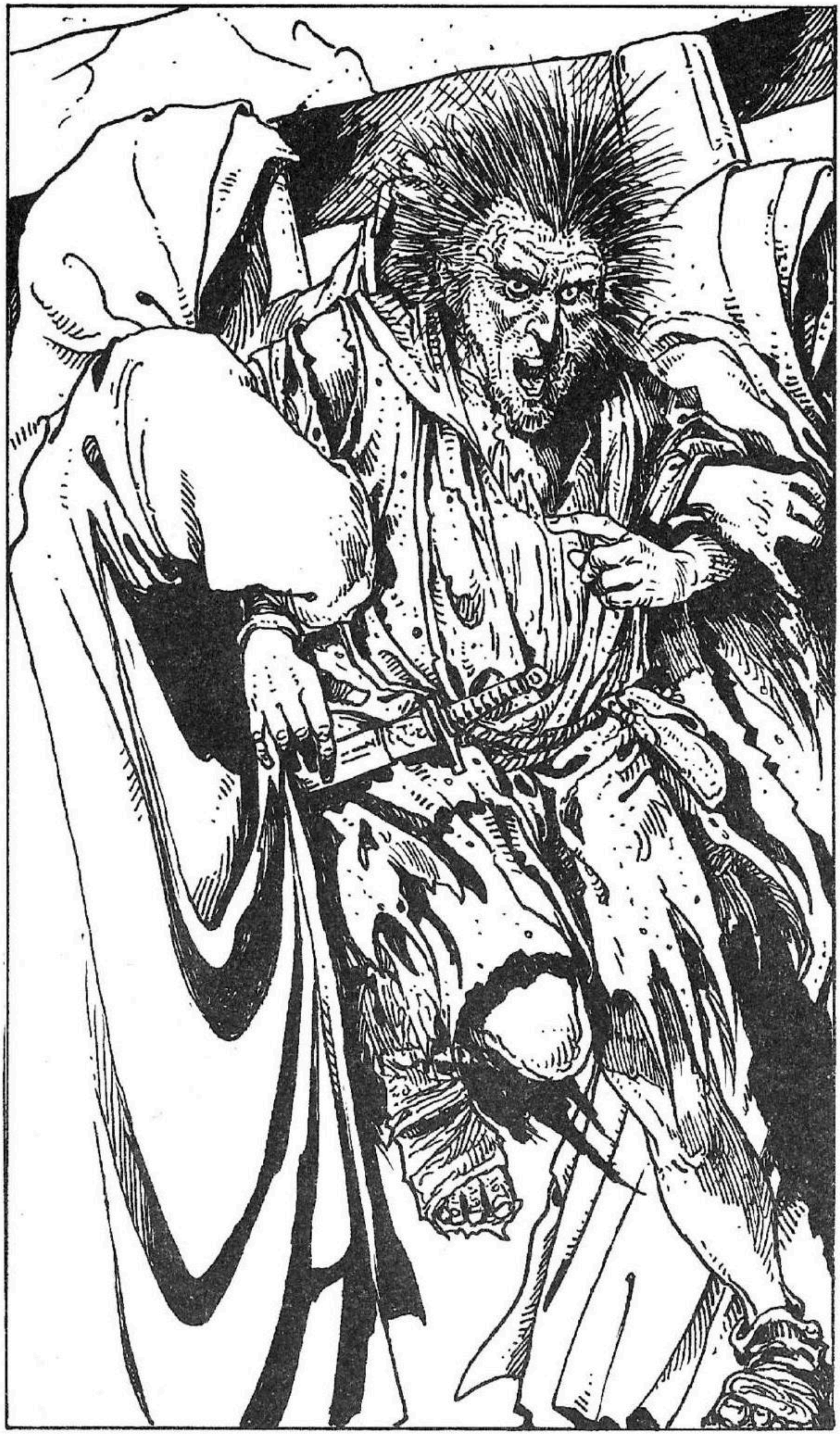
With practised ease you draw your pistol, ram the bullet home, cock it and shoot. In the enclosed space the detonation is deafening, the muzzle flash leaves you temporarily blinded. After a few seconds it clears. The wizard lies in an untidy heap on the ground, his chest a smoking ruin. There's no doubt about it: he's dead; you can add another mage to your list of conquests. Delete the silver bullet from your Equipment List. If you have a Shauca Scar, turn to **125**. Otherwise, turn to **384**.

331

Mencius can still protect himself, but he is vulnerable to your weapon. His SKILL is 2 points less than your *Initial* SKILL (since he is not using a weapon); his STAMINA is your *Initial* STAMINA. Fight him as normal. However, he is not using a sword – instead he will attack you with magic. If your Attack Strength is greater than his, it means you have managed to strike him and may inflict damage as normal. If your Attack Strength is less than or equal to his, it means that you were unable to find an opening. His magical blast will hit you every round even if your Attack Strength is greater. In the first round you must lose 1 point from your STAMINA; then, as the power of the magic amulet is overcome, in every subsequent round you must lose 2 points of STAMINA. If you reduce Mencius to 2 or fewer points of STAMINA, turn to **124** if you have the word 'reflect' on your *Adventure Sheet* or to **174** if you don't.

332

You run down the slope, racked with pain from the poison, and plunge into the fast-flowing stream. The cool water soothes you a little, but the poison is still spreading. Before you can do anything else, the venom paralyses your limbs. Your misadventures end here.



333

In the blink of an eye you find yourself facing a wild-eyed ragamuffin, dressed in ill-fitting rags. On either side of him stand two faceless, robed figures who are continually pulling him one way and another. 'You cheeky rascal,' he splutters at you. 'You *dare* to push your luck after dispatching the Reaver in such a cavalier fashion? I'll have to make another one now. Get back to your own world; you give me a headache.' Lose 2 points from your LUCK. Also, you are automatically Unlucky in the roll you just made. Now turn back to the paragraph you came from and continue.

334

What *was* that thing? You stoop to examine the corpse of the huge hairy monstrosity. You've never seen anything remotely like it, even in books. After a fight like that, you feel you deserve some kind of a trophy. You cut off one of the creature's claws (note down Shauca's Claw on your *Adventure Sheet*). You push on, following a path up into the hills. After another couple of hours' walking, you reach a vantage point from which you can see the lay of the land. Behind you is the town you passed. The river continues past it, snaking round the hills. Ahead of you is the sea, and off to your right you can make out a coastal city. Will you:

Go back to the town?	Turn to **143**
Head for the coast?	Turn to **393**
Make for the city?	Turn to **27**

335

You scratch the Holy Symbol on the dusty ground, drawing a curious crowd of street urchins. You toss the stone, then sight along the direction indicated. It leads to the rear of an ornate building of white stone with delicately fluted columns. You slip in through a rear entrance, finding yourself in the precincts of a huge bath-house. Portly, naked bathers lounge around in steaming water; you have no way of knowing which, if any, is a mage. Before you can proceed any further, the bath-house's bouncers, two fat, bald men in absurd silk bloomers, block your way.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First BOUNCER	5	8
Second BOUNCER	6	7

Fight the bouncers one at a time. If you win, you face a bath-house full of angry bathers, so it's best to leave while you can: mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet* and turn to **241**.

336

When you left the Margrave's castle it was autumn, but now the sun is shining fiercely. Wherever this strange place may be, it's certainly hot. Since you have no idea of the locality, you must fall back on first principles in order to follow Reinhardt. What would the foolish young lord do? You pace up and down, running through all you know about Reinhardt; it's not very much. Suddenly you notice a glint of metal at your feet. Reaching down, you find a gold ring, with an inlaid ruby, which had been buried in the dirt. Add 1 to your *Initial* and current LUCK. Note down 'ruby ring' on your Equipment List. If you follow the river downstream, turn to **159**. If you climb to the mountain top, turn to **250**.

337

It's Reinhardt! Somehow he has managed to find his way to the city. But you waste no time in celebrating a reunion that could hardly be described as happy: Mencius must be found and destroyed! You bustle Reinhardt down the steps and into the marketplace. Turn to **267**.

338

You hand over 5 Gold Pieces to the stallholder (cross them off your *Adventure Sheet*). Turn to **116**.

339

You are surprised to learn that the Spider Mage can speak your language. 'Spare me, please!' he begs, whining desperately. 'I can help you. I am a traveller of the planes – I know the secrets of the spheres.' You are inclined to doubt such grandiloquent self-praise, but you motion for him to continue, keeping your sword ready just in case. 'You are from the same bubble as Mencius,' he goes on. You prick up your ears. 'The Chaos Mage has made his lair in the Omnipresent Tower. This place exists throughout the dimensions, even in the Realms of Tales Told . . .' You notice a sudden furtive movement. While distracting you with his babble, the mage has grabbed a concealed dagger from his robes. But you are far too experienced to fall for such a trick. Before he can lunge, you dash the dagger from his hands. Turn to **44**.

340

You run, but you are at a disadvantage of two legs against eight. The crab gains on you, grabs you in its pincer and lifts you into the air.

GIANT CRAB	SKILL 9	STAMINA 10

In your desperate fight for survival, you suffer a temporary deduction of 2 from your Attack Strength, as the crab has a grip on you. If you defeat the crab, turn to **10**.

341

The chase nears its end . . . your lungs are bursting . . . Mencius turns his head and sees you . . . a silver bullet from your pistol brings him crashing down . . . 'I curse you to the end of eternity . . . to the end of eternity . . . to the end of eternity . . . to the end . . .'

You wake up, to find yourself lying in a comfortable bed, staring up into brown eyes.

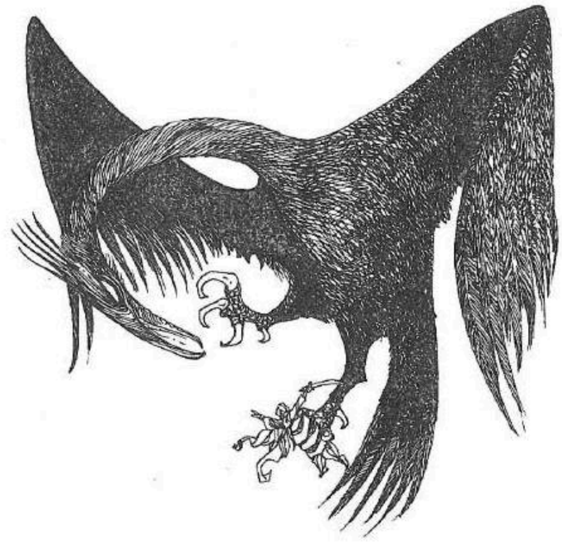
'Forgive me for hypnotizing you,' says their owner. 'It was necessary in order to cast the spell which places our language in your mind.' You start to reply, then realize the implications of what he has said. Note down the word 'kal' on your *Adventure Sheet* (if you already have 'basic kal', erase 'basic'). He continues, 'I have also learnt something about your mission. The foe you pursued through the dimensional portal into our land – the Chaos Mage, Mencius – is a great danger. His power is such that I can sense his presence in this land – and day by day he is growing stronger!' This is a most confusing development. This man is clearly a sorcerer, yet he is like no other you have ever met. In your years as a magehunter you have found you can almost feel the malice exuded by a mage. Could it be that there are some wizards who are not evil? Surely not, since magic is the gift of the evil one. And yet . . . Turn to **48**.

342

There is another blinding flash, and you are standing on the very spot where you arrived in this strange land. The Demon-creature laughs a laugh of pure malice, points to the spot at which you disposed of Mencius's body, and says, 'Foolish mortal! Reinhardt died here. The former owner of this body now wears another. But since Reinhardt is dead, I will gladly speed your journey to his side!' So saying, the thing attacks.

DEMON OF THE RING SKILL 12 STAMINA 20

If you defeat the Demon, turn to **69**.



343

Mark a cross on your *Adventure Sheet*. After the show, you see which tent the magician returns to then sneak up behind it. If Kurt is with you, turn to **177**; otherwise, turn to **59**.

344

With a final swing, you dispose of the creature, its body toppling off the back of the beetle. The enormous insect continues along the tunnel at a remarkable pace, but the ride is surprisingly smooth. Shrouded in darkness, you have no way of telling the time, but you guess that well over an hour passes before you are disgorged into another chamber. This is rather smaller than the first, but nevertheless it contains several buildings. You see two of the black-skinned dwellers below, but luckily they pay no attention to you. As you don't know how to control the beetle, it just continues straight through the middle of the chamber and along a tunnel opposite. This begins to slope upwards, while narrowing. You pass an alcove, and a startled ebony face looks up at you, then starts to give chase. Ahead, you see that the ceiling of the tunnel is abruptly getting lower. Taking a risk, you leap down in front of the beetle and run, pell mell, for the narrower section of the tunnel. You reach safety just in time. The beetle plunges forward and comes to a sudden halt, wedged tight; it blocks the tunnel, its legs flailing, foiling your pursuer for the moment. You hurry up the slope before the beetle can get free. After a short while you reach the end of the tunnel, where a set of steps are cut in the wall leading up to a patch of sunlight. You emerge from a hollow tree into daylight, looking across at a large, walled city, straddling a sea cliff. A ten-minute walk brings you within its walls. Turn to **100**.

345

You collect some dry wood and build a fire; there is plenty of tinder, and the job is easy. Mencius's body is soon being consumed by a roaring blaze. You sit by the fire and rest, since you are unaccountably tired. You drift off to sleep, waking as the red orb of the sun slides behind the hill opposite. Checking your possessions, you are surprised to find no sign of your pistol or mirrors. Turn to **75**.

346

Roll one dice. If the result is an odd number, turn to **243**. If the result is an even number, check your *Adventure Sheet*: if you have a Book of Craft, turn to **5**. If you haven't, turn to **167**.

347

You wait for a month, during which time the situation grows steadily worse. You realize that none of the factions trusts you, since you refuse to commit yourself. The Chamberlain, with whom you have never got on particularly well, seems to be emerging as the new ruler of the domain. One morning you awaken to find soldiers searching your room. Finding Mencius's spell book, they drag you before the Chamberlain.

'As you suspected, sire,' announces the sergeant who arrested you, 'we found this work of the Evil One in his possession,' and he passes Mencius's Book of Craft to the Chamberlain.

He flips a couple of pages with distaste. 'Do you have anything to say before sentence is passed?' he enquires, arching his eyebrows. You protest that you were hoping to pursue the mage who kidnapped Lord Reinhardt, but you trail off as it seems obvious the Chamberlain is deaf to your words. 'It is well known that those exposed to the practice of sorcery are often drawn by its allure. Despite your past meritorious conduct, there can be no exceptions. You burn at dawn.'

348

The city of Kallamehr lies on the coast, several days' journey distant. Luckily a road leads there; following it, you are able to travel safely by night and sleep in what shade you can find during the day to escape the blazing sun. Finally the walls of the city rear up ahead of you – sand-coloured ramparts completely different from the drab, grey granite of the Margrave's castle. Close to the gates, you join a stream of other travellers making their way into the city. Turn to **100**.

349

You wander through the market, constantly assailed by traders eager for your custom. Ignoring them, you find yourself drawn to the tower. You approach it, staring up the flight of stairs which leads to the door. If you have a Book of Craft, turn to **98**. Otherwise, turn to **13**.

350

It's hot; it's really hot. The sun is beating down on you as you walk, and Reinhardt wheezes and gasps for air, staggering along behind you. You make your way along the mountainside, finally entering a gully; the cool relief of the shade is like a banquet to a starving man. After a while the gully opens out into a valley down which flows a river, presumably the same one you saw earlier. You make your way down to the river's edge and refresh yourself with the cool water.

Your only warning of attack is a savage yell. You whirl, to face a creature from nightmare: fanged bestial features snarl in a green-hued face and a wickedly curved sword slashes at you.

GREEN NIGHTMARE   SKILL 7   STAMINA 10

Reinhardt clutches his head in horror – he is so panic-stricken he is useless to you. You may *Escape* if you wish by grabbing your companion and leaping into the river. However, if you do this, the creature will automatically injure you (you may reduce this attack using LUCK in the usual way). If you *Escape*, turn to **15**. If you defeat the monster, turn to **140**.

351

The audience is for one person only so, if you have a companion, or Kurt, they must wait for you outside the palace. You are led into a magnificent audience chamber in which Asiah Albudur sits regally on a throne, attended by huge men with oiled muscles and sour expressions. She peers at you short-sightedly.

You prostrate yourself before her, then, rising to your knees, tell her all about the peril of Mencius. She listens to your story, then pauses for long seconds before declaring: 'What babble is this? Why should I fear some wizard? I have six of my own to protect me!' She waves her hand imperiously. Turn to **148**.

352

Seizing you in its talons, the bird wheels into the sky. If you have a dog, or Kurt, written on your *Adventure Sheet*, cross them off. If you have a shackles key, a Sneeka Scar or a Shauca Scar, turn to **251**. Otherwise, turn to **3**.

353

Khasim's cryptic remark remains a mystery for thirty minutes, during which time he urges you to rest and prepare for the journey. He points out that Mencius has been in Kallamehr for a couple of days already, but that you will be able to evade detection on entering the city. Finally, he bids you prepare for departure. He carries the carpet out of the cave into the fresh air of the valley. If you have a shackles key, turn to **56**; otherwise, turn to **227**.

354

'You swing at the flapping black bird, twisting to avoid its swoops. The snake and the lion both fade into nothingness.'

RAVEN	SKILL 7	STAMINA 4

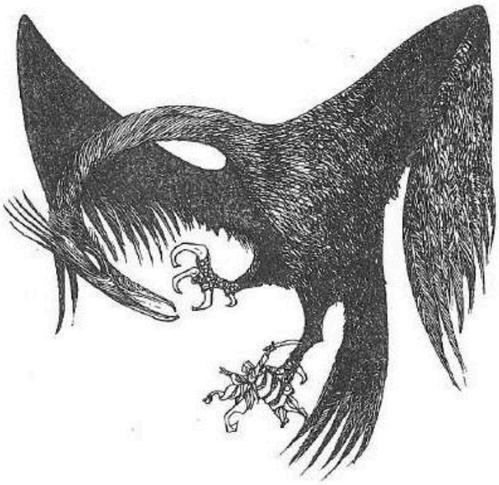
Fight the raven as normal; however, you may not die. If your STAMINA is reduced to zero or less, turn to **151**. If you defeat the raven, turn to **95**.

355

You stare at the wizard for a while, and he stares curiously back at you. For a long moment there is silence. You can't help feeling that this man's eyes lack the evil ambition of the mages you have encountered before – but then maybe he's just clever. Without being able to communicate, there's little you can do. If you change your mind and strangle him after all, turn to **299**. If you take a gamble and release him, turn to **92**.

356

The palace officials are slightly suspicious of you, but you are careful in your enquiries and soon they relax a little. You discover that, only a day or two earlier, a foreigner meeting the description you give them obtained an audience with Asiah Albudur. As a result of that audience, he was granted permission to live in the Rangor Tower overlooking the market, a building which has been deserted since the death of the previous ruler. Clearly this was an extraordinary turn of events. You are now fairly sure where Mencius is hiding: the Rangor Tower. If you go there now, turn to **312**. Otherwise, note down the number '312' on your *Adventure Sheet*. If you are given the option to go to the place where you know Mencius is, you may turn to this paragraph. Now, if you want an audience with Asiah Albudur, turn to **197** if you have the word 'bath' written down, or to **162** if you do not. Otherwise, mark a cross on your *Sheet*, then turn to **241**.



357

You are travelling through land which becomes increasingly mountainous. Ahead of you, snow-capped peaks rise above the horizon. As you climb, the temperature becomes more bearable, but the quality of the air deteriorates. You see no intelligent life, just several strange species of animals. Check your *Adventure Sheet*. If you have 2 or more Provisions, turn to **82**. If you have fewer than 2 Provisions, turn to **172**.

358

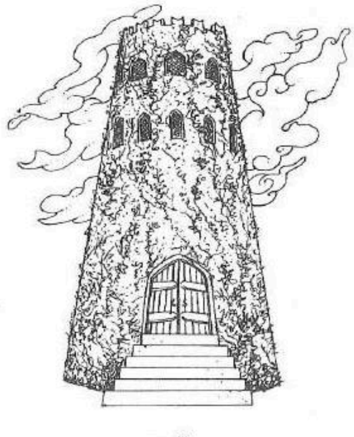
You kick the body down the slope. Water affects wizards in strange ways. It makes their bodies swell up to twice their normal size. And if they are dead, their swelling bodies dissolve rapidly. Maybe a village downstream will have bad-tasting water for a day or so, but it shouldn't harm them. You watch the body as it is carried along by the current. There is no sign of it swelling! Unable to believe your own eyes, you slither down the slope and race along the steep bank. You follow the corpse for many metres, but it remains the same size. That can mean only one thing: the body was not that of Mencius! Your opponent has eluded you somehow. Turn to **187**.

359

Regain up to 4 points of STAMINA. Now decide whether to go along the beach to the left (turn to **64**) or to the right (turn to **220**).

360

Your gesture brings forth a round of applause from the crowd. They raise you shoulder high and carry you round the tavern. Everyone wants to be your companion. For the next few days you are a celebrity. You stay at various people's houses, partaking of fine foods. They dress you in clothes of silk (note these down on your *Adventure Sheet*) and you pick up a little of their language (note down 'basic kal' on your *Adventure Sheet* if it is not there already). After a week, when you finally persuade your hosts that you have urgent business, they shower you with gifts. You may restore your STAMINA to its *Initial* level (this will *not* restore points lost by travelling through the Magic Portal). You should also add the following to your list of possessions: lapis lazuli brooch, turban, green leather boots, short sword with enamelled scabbard. Now you must continue your search. If you have a ruby ring, turn to **130**. If you haven't, turn to **126**.



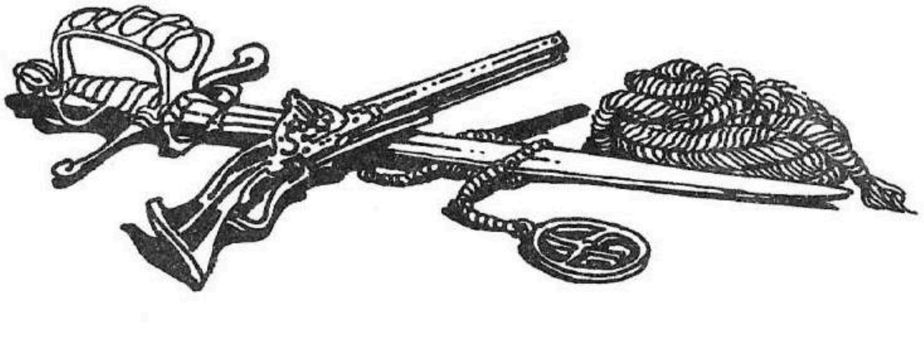
361

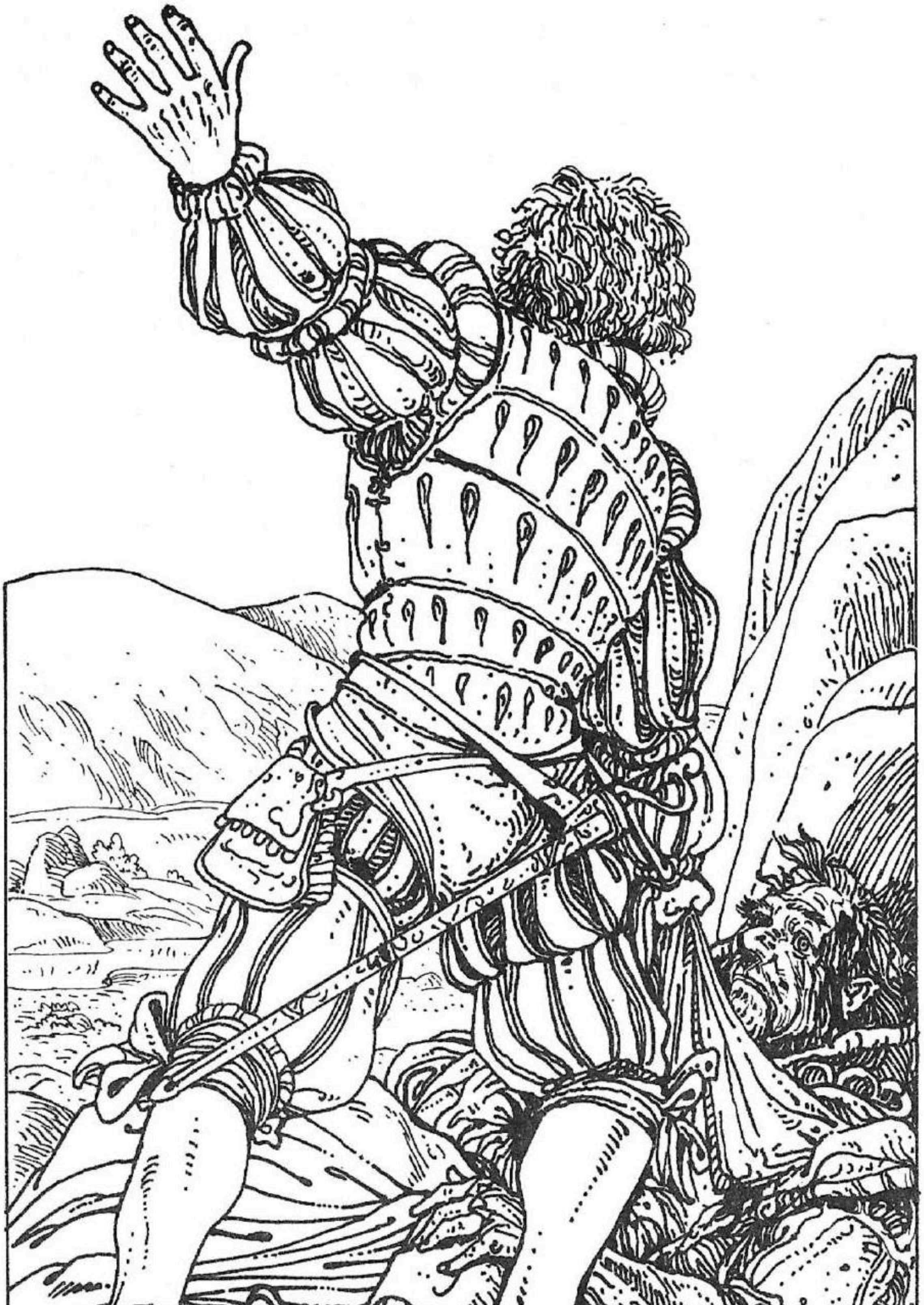
Evil lurks inside this tower; you know it in your bones. If you have six or more mirrors and wish to place them in a circle round the tower, cross them off your *Adventure Sheet* and note down the word 'reflect'.

Restore your STAMINA to its full value (do not recover points lost by travelling through the Magic Portal). You stride up the steps and warily push open the brass-studded door. Within, the opulently furnished Great Hall is empty, so you walk towards the staircase in the opposite wall. You step on something hard and are surprised to see that many tiny bones are scattered over the rich red carpet. Behind you the door slams shut and, from the bones, a horde of living Skeletons arise, wielding bright bronze scimitars. If you have the Book of Craft, turn to **190**. Otherwise, if you have the sacred mace, turn to **79**. If you do not, turn to **270**.

362

The old man pauses, wrinkles his nose and peers at you suspiciously. He asks you something you can't quite understand, though it includes the word 'Mencius'. He knows something! After a long explanation, mainly using sign language, he gets you to understand that he can teach you his language properly if you wish. You realize he must be talking about some sort of magic spell. If you agree to this, turn to **154**. If instead you demand that he tell you where Mencius is, turn to **269**.





363

As a precaution, you wet your sword's blade with some of Mencius's blood, so that it can harm the sorcerer. You notice that your sword has changed – your practical steel broadsword is now a fancy, bejewelled rapier. A few slaps across the face bring Mencius round.

He groans again, then looks up, bleary-eyed, at you. 'What are you doing, you fool?' he snarls. 'How dare you lay hands on me.' You show him the rapier, poised to strike. Fear pales his face as he stares, first at the rapier, then at you. He gasps. 'What sorcery is this? You look exactly like me!'

His words make you look down at yourself. No longer are you wearing rough garments of undyed cloth and leather. In their place are expensive clothes of red silk. Also, your body seems somehow slimmer. Of a sudden it strikes you – Reinhardt was wearing red! You have somehow been magically transferred into his body! Then this Mencius before you is in fact Reinhardt. And, occupying your body, Mencius is . . . where? Reinhardt groans, and you realize that the bullet-wound you inflicted on Mencius has re-opened without magery to close it. Reinhardt is in pain. You staunch the wound as best you can, then turn your attention to planning. Turn to **67**.

364

At the bazaar, you creep among the tents until you reach a central, cleared area. Here a crowd is watching Saba perform on a makeshift stage. His clothing is certainly outlandish, but it doesn't resemble anything from your own land. Saba, heavily made up, is currently making a profusion of silk scarves appear from various parts of his body, flinging them on to a table that is already laden with rabbits, fruit, cups, balls and even a little yellow bbrd in a cage. His build seems to be right, and his hair-colour and facial shape match, but you cannot be certain that this is Mencius because of his heavy make-up. If you wait in ambush and attack the magician when he finishes his show, turn to **343**. If you prefer to follow him discreetly, turn to **134**. Otherwise, you may give up on Saba; mark a cross and turn to **241**.

365

You continue to descend, taking great care. Finally you come across a mountain village, full of strange, rough-skinned barbarians. Though crude, they look after you for a while, then help you travel to the next village. This way, leapfrogging from village to village, you make your way towards the coast. You slowly acquire some familiarity with the language (note down 'basic kal' on your *Adventure Sheet* if it is not already there). The villages get progressively larger, and finally you arrive at the sea coast, where you enter a town.

Here you manage to obtain sea passage round the coast to the main city, which, you have learnt is called Kallamehr. So it is that you finally alight from the ship in the strangest city you have ever seen, the perilous maze that is Kallamehr. Turn to **100**.

366

You look back over your shoulder, but Reinhardt didn't make it out. You put some distance between you and the cave, running back the way you came. When you reach the river, exhaustion catches up with you and you sink to the ground and instantly fall asleep.

When you wake up, it is dawn. You have no idea how long you have slept, but you do know that you are ravenously hungry; lose 1 point of STAMINA. You will have to find some food soon, or starve. Your best chance is to follow the river and hope to find a settlement. As you climb wearily to your feet, there's a loud squeak from your clothing, and a furry, weasel-like head peers out at you. This is too much! You try to throw the pesky animal away, but it has other ideas: it sinks its teeth into the flesh of your hand, gripping hard as you shriek in pain. Finally it lets go and leaps nimbly away, disappearing down a hole. Cursing the sharp-fanged rodent, you wrap some cloth round your injured hand. Luckily the bite is not very severe (note down 'Sneeka Scar' on your *Adventure Sheet*). You follow the bank of the river downstream. Turn to **110**.

367

'Yes!' a familiar voice pipes up. 'There's something you must do for me!'

Sure enough, it's Reinhardt. Somehow he must have evaded the Shambling Shauca and been rescued by this wizard. If the box marked 'Switch' on your *Adventure Sheet* is ticked, turn to **266**; otherwise, turn to **133**.

368

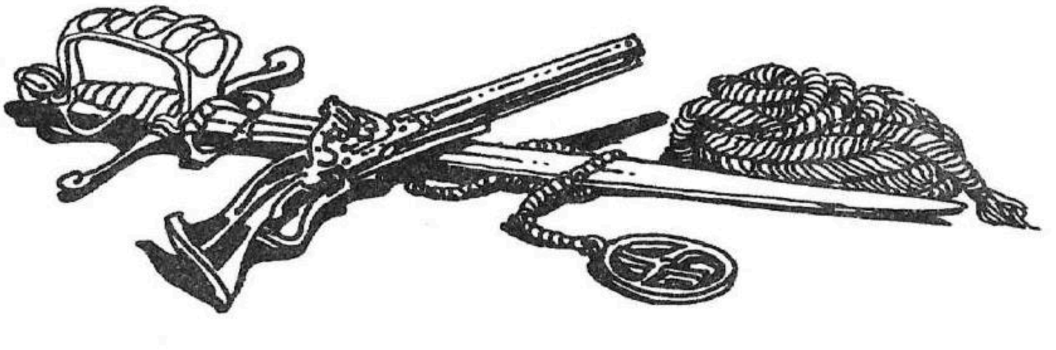
'Do you have any experience of disposing of this kind of villain?' he asks.

You laugh. 'It's my life's work,' you tell him.

'Good, then I have only one piece of advice for you – star-bright, I am born in the heart of the mountain, but my true home is on the brow of beauty. I am a key to your success.' Baffled, you ask the cryptic captain what he means. 'Some call me the Riddling Reaver,' he explains, 'though to be honest I do more riddling than reaving. Haven't you ever heard it said that the journey is more important than the destination; that finding a solution to a problem is more important than the solution itself?'

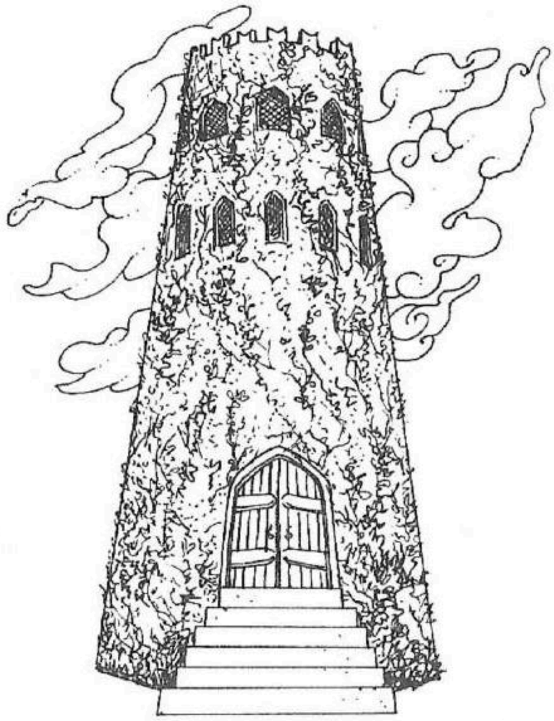
You think back over your career as a magehunter. All that ever mattered to you was defeating evil – nothing gives you more satisfaction than burning a mage. 'No, I can't say I have,' you reply.

The Riddling Reaver, apparently offended by your frank admission, grumpily directs you to a cabin, then attends to his ship's duties. The journey is smooth and uneventful. In the ship's cabin you find a first aid kit, which you may use if you are injured – roll one dice to find out how many points of STAMINA you recover. A few hours later, shrouded in dense fog, the ship comes to a stop. The Reaver ushers you off the deck, on to a cliff top. Without so much as a farewell, he returns to his strange vessel and sets sail once more. The fog starts to clear and, a short distance away, lies a city. Since the Reaver brought you here, you can only assume that Mencius lies within its walls, so you make haste, passing into its mazy streets. Add 2 to your LUCK score and turn to **100**.



369

Hungry as you are, you make your way back along the route you came by, until you reach the place where you arrived and the remains of the fire you lit yesterday. Now you may follow the river downstream (turn to **245**) or climb the mountain to get a better view of the terrain (turn to **388**).



370

The old storyteller thanks you for your money and, in answer to your enquiries, starts another story. 'One of Burah-Bashar's friends was notoriously mean, although he was rich, he never gave anything to anybody. One day, this miser was walking near the river with his friends when he slipped and fell in. "Help!" he shouted, "I can't swim!"

'His friends ran to help, and one crouched on the bank, stretched out his hand and called, "Give me your hand

– I'll pull you out!" The miser continued to bob up and down and call for help, but he didn't give his friend his hand. Another of his friends tried the same thing, but again the miser failed to give him his hand. Then Burah-Bashar said, "Take my hand and I will pull you out!" The miser took his hand and Burah-Bashar pulled him out of the water. Burah-Bashar explained: "When you say 'Give!' to him, he does nothing, but when you say 'Take!' he takes!"'

You ask the storyteller again if he has seen any foreigners in the city, but he just launches into yet another Burah-Bashar story. If you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **205**. If you do not, mark a cross on it and turn to **241**.

371

'My tale concerns a true prince among the Genii, his name Al-Ra'ad al-Kasif, who dwelt in the Omnipresent Tower in days gone by. From this place he could visit any land that struck his fancy, and he was welcomed at the courts of the mighty, both Genie and mortal. But an enemy, jealous of his power, resolved to put an end to him. Coming upon the tower by stealth, he tricked Al-Ra'ad al-Kasif into wasting his power, then attacked him while he was weak.'

AL-RA'AD AL-KASIF SKILL 6 STAMINA 10

Conduct the battle between yourself and Al-Ra'ad al-Kasif the Genie Prince as normal. However, note that you cannot die: if your STAMINA is reduced to zero or less, turn to **151**. If you defeat Al-Ra'ad al-Kasif, turn to **228**.

372

Al-Bakbuk is overjoyed to receive the precious gift from you. He hugs you warmly, kissing you on both cheeks, then hurries off to present you with a parting gift, which turns out to be an intricately embroidered robe (cross the jewellery or ruby ring off your *Adventure Sheet*). 'This trivial item may assist you,' says Al-Bakbuk, 'as it is the robe of a retired Vizier of the Caliph's court. People will treat you with respect while you are wearing this robe.' Although you have little idea of what a 'vizier' or a 'caliph' may be, you accept the gift gracefully (note down the vizier's robe on your *Adventure Sheet*). Al-Bakbuk also advises you, if you are in Kallamehr, to seek out his brother, the storyteller, Al-Haddar. Now will you:

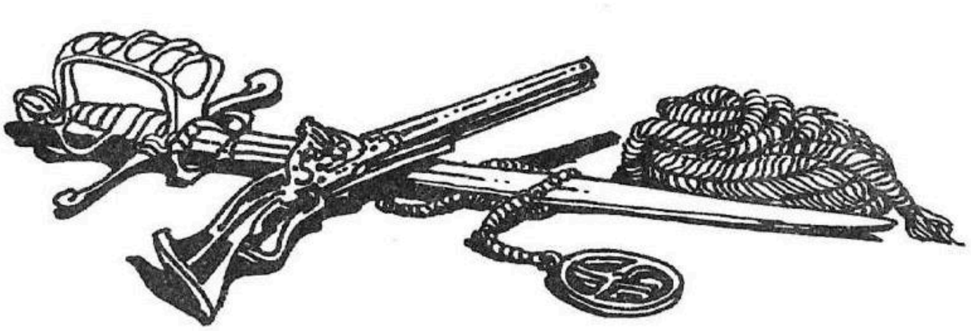
Go shopping?	Turn to **248**
Try to pick up the trail?	Turn to **322**
Head for the city of Kallamehr?	Turn to **348**

373

This is a teeming city in a strange land. Who knows how many mages infest it? Since you don't have any of Mencius's blood, you have little choice of methods. If you have Kurt with you and wish to use him, turn to **51**. Otherwise, you may draw a Holy Symbol (turn to **335**). If you prefer to try something else, return to **241** and choose another option.

374

You estimate that it will take you several days to reach the city. You set off at an easy pace, knowing that for such a journey it's best to avoid over-exertion. Unfortunately, the land you are travelling through is almost devoid of edible vegetation. If you have no Provisions, deduct 2 points from your STAMINA. You see no signs of habitation or human life at first, then you come across a road – a promising sign, and something which should speed your journey considerably. Turn to **76**.



375

The thing grunts once more – the resemblance to a human voice is uncanny, though you can make out no recognizable words. Then it circles you once . . . and attacks! Turn to **38**.

376

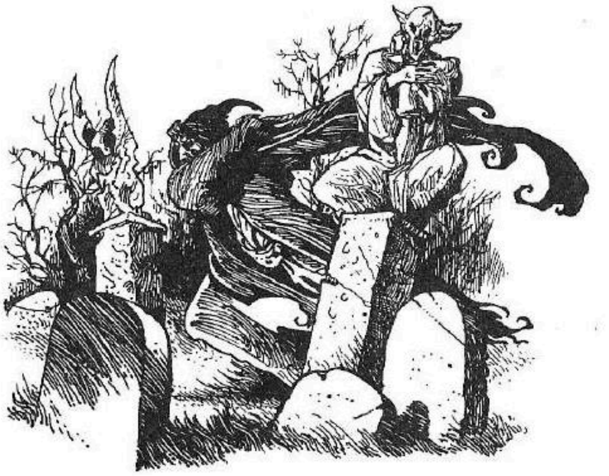
You half run, half tumble down the steps of the tower and, after glancing back to make sure you aren't pursued, lose yourself in the bustle of the market. Your heart pounds frantically against your rib cage, but you find a quiet back street and, breathing deeply, compose yourself. You now know where Mencius is to be found. Write the number '312' on your *Adventure Sheet* and erase the word 'trail'. If you are given the choice of going to the place where Mencius is, you may turn to this number if you wish. Now mark four crosses on your *Adventure Sheet*, then turn to **241**.

377

Before long you are back at the town. However bad the gate guards are, they can't be worse than the hairy horror. Now you understand why these people put walls round their towns. Turn to **40**.

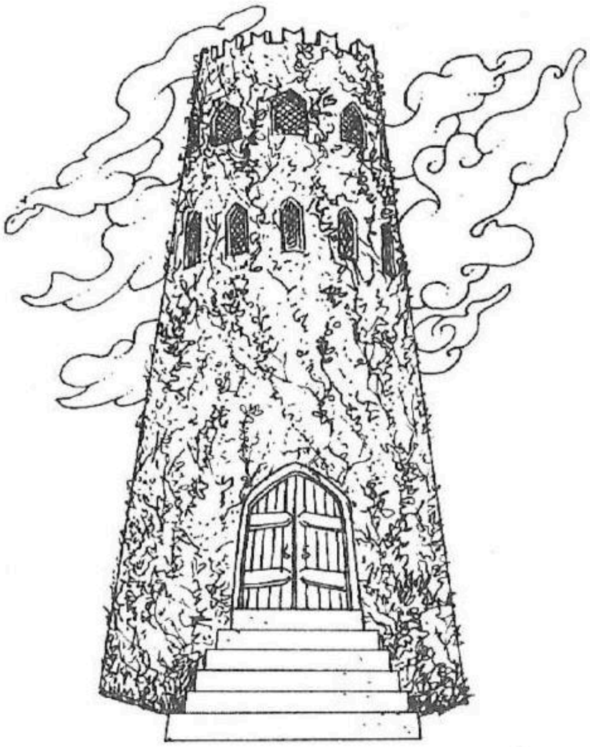
378

The Genie appears in a clap of thunder, and you are gratified to see that Mencius falters. You command the Genie to attack. Mencius defends himself with blasts of power, tearing ragged holes in the magical creature. You take shelter from the battle, but it soon becomes evident that Mencius is winning. If you have the word 'reflect' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **88**; otherwise, turn to **202**.



379

You tear strips of cloth from Mencius's robe and fashion a makeshift bandage. Next, in order to tie him to earth, you take off your jacket of undyed cloth . . . but it is no longer undyed. It is a fine red jerkin, carefully stitched in the latest style. You have no recollection of changing clothes. Now that you look, your sword has also changed, into a fancy, bejewelled rapier. As you ponder this mystery, Mencius stirs. At his first words, 'What sorcery is this?', the awful truth dawns on you: Mencius has switched bodies. This is Reinhardt before you, imprisoned in the mage's weakened form! When he discovers what has happened, Reinhardt loses his usual bluster, begging you to set things right. Turn to **67**.



380

The journey back to the town seems to take a very short time. You feel sure that Mencius cannot be here, otherwise the ritual with the Holy Symbol would not have led you outside the town walls. Where would he go? You know that he likes cities – places bustling with people who can be tricked and manipulated. The nearest city to this town is Kallamehr and it doesn't take you long to discover how to get there. Turn to **348**.

381

Watching the physician work on Reinhardt, you are surprised at his methods. Rather than cauterizing the wound with a red-hot bar, he cleans it thoroughly then rubs it lightly with leaves, before wrapping a bandage round Reinhardt's stomach. Reinhardt, who has been silent all the time you were in the tavern, now seems to cheer up. Note down 'bandage' in the Companion box of your *Adventure Sheet*, and change the SKILL score to 6 and the STAMINA score to 10. Your benefactor insists on returning to the tavern, and Reinhardt goes along with this. Turn to **55**.

382

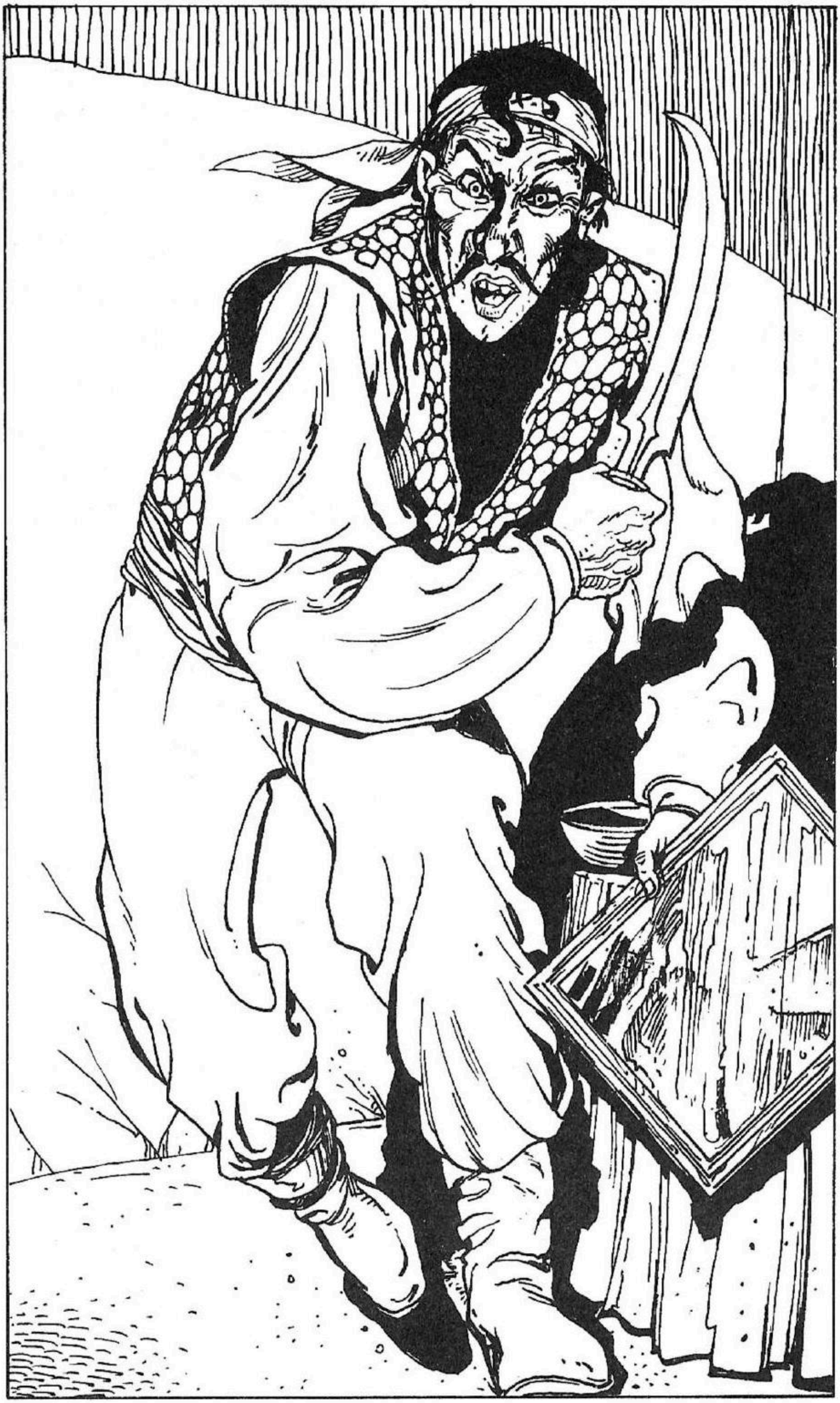
Note that if you gave the vizier a sword and if you have no other weapon, you will fight with your Attack Strength reduced by 2 points. If you gave the vizier a vizier's robe, turn to **217**; otherwise turn to **326**.

383

'You really know how to draw attention to yourself,' a familiar voice whispers to you. You look around. There is no one near you who might have spoken. 'Of course, I tend to be a little more discreet in my activities,' the voice continues. You still have no idea where it is coming from, but you recognize the sarcastic tone – it is Mencius! Your sixth sense, which has saved you on countless occasions, directs you to a run-down house, a little way ahead of you. Mencius's mocking voice continues to echo in your skull as you leap through the open window. Your instinct was right. Mencius himself stands there, chanting and gesturing. Turn to **91**.

384

You search the wizard's body and find a small pouch containing a number of strange things: feathers, bones, tiny jars of powder and so on. Note down the wizard's pouch on your *Adventure Sheet*. Further along the tunnel, you come upon the wizard's home. There is more strange magical paraphernalia here, but nothing that strikes you as useful. However, a pan of stew hangs over a fire, reminding you how hungry you are. The stew is far too spicy, but in your current condition you could eat anything, so you wolf it down gratefully. After a short rest you face a choice of ways. You can retrace your steps to the place where you arrived and follow the river in the hope of finding civilization (turn to **245**, unless you have 'basic kal' or 'Kurt' written down on your *Adventure Sheet*, in which case turn to **68**) or you can continue along the valley (turn to **118**).



385

For some reason the young fellow is showing you your own reflection in a mirror; either he has misunderstood you or this is some strange local custom. You try to explain once more, but he beckons you closer as if to share a secret. 'Kallamehr! Kallamehr!' he says in a voice full of mystery and hidden meaning. Suddenly you feel a slight movement, and you realize what his game is – he's trying to pick your pocket! With reflexes born of a hundred fights, you leap backwards, drawing your broadsword in a single fluid motion. In turn, he pulls out a wickedly curved knife and slashes at you with it.

PICKPOCKET	SKILL 6	STAMINA 7

If you defeat the pickpocket in four or fewer Attack Rounds, turn to **102**. If you are still fighting after four Attack Rounds, turn to **204**.

386

You can retrieve your 2 Gold Pieces. Apart from these, Al-Fakik has nothing of value in his hut – nothing that you can find, at any rate. If you have the word 'trail' on your *Adventure Sheet*, turn to **205**. Otherwise, mark a cross on it and turn to **241**.

387

'I obey!' the creature announces, clapping its hands and vanishing. Al-Bakbuk gets to his feet.

'Truly you are blessed!' he cries. 'You are the master of a Genie – one of the Efreet Servants of Hazah.' With a start, you realize you can now understand him perfectly (erase the word 'basic' from your *Adventure Sheet*). You now know the secret of the ring. If you wish to use it, when you are told that you may, add up the digits making up the paragraph you are at (for example, this paragraph is 387; 3 + 8 + 7 = 18) then subtract the result from the paragraph in order to find the new paragraph number you should turn to. Now will you:

Summon the Genie to reward Al-Bakbuk?	Turn to **246**
Summon the Genie to take you straight to Reinhardt?	Turn to **342**
Continue without summoning the Genie?	Turn to **315**

388

Exhausting though it is, you drag yourself up the mountainside in the glare of the sun. Luckily, you seem to have arrived on the tallest hill in these parts and you soon have a fine view of the surroundings. Finally you arrive at the summit. Although your vision is limited by the heat haze, you can see for many kilometres in all directions. Your eye follows the silver ribbon of the river at whose bank you arrived. It is joined by several mountain streams and, some way off, passes through a town. At this range you can't see people, but the signs of habitation are unmistakable. On the distant horizon a glimmer betokens either the sea or a mighty lake or river. As your eye follows it around you realize it must be the sea. You can make out a dark area there – you wouldn't swear to it, but it could be a city. Turning further around, you look down at a range of low mountains and foothills. Only a few kilometres distant, you see a thin plume of smoke ascending. Could it be a village? Do you:

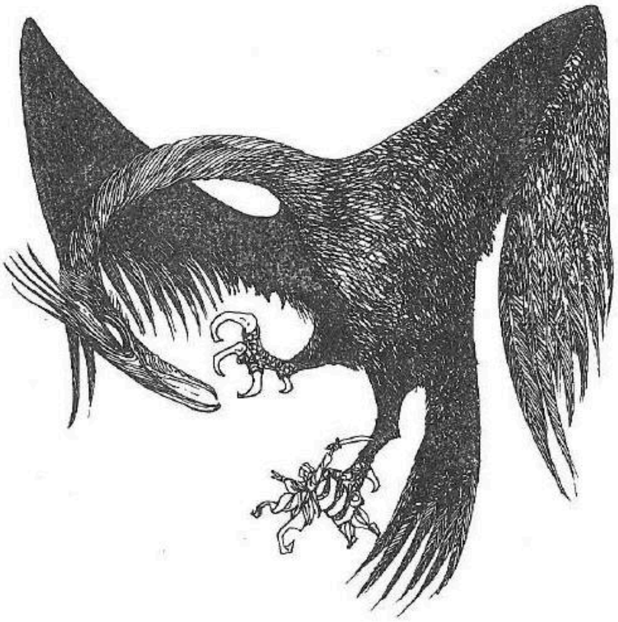
Climb back down to the river and follow it downstream?	Turn to **195**
Head for the coast, and the 'city'?	Turn to **27**
Make your way towards the plume of smoke?	Turn to **302**

389

One passage seems as good as another, so you hurry along the left-hand tunnel. After a few metres a voice similar to the previous one calls out to you from close by. Startled, you realize that there is a hidden alcove in which two more dwellers in darkness are sitting. Keeping your head shrouded by the cloak's hood, you grunt and hurry on, hoping your bluff will work. Certainly, no alarm is raised and there is no pursuit. If you have a serrated knife, turn to **273**; otherwise, turn to **49**.

390

You hide behind a drape and wait. Time passes. You doze lightly, finally being woken by the sound of voices and someone entering the room. You spring out, weapon at the ready, to find yourself facing an old man and woman. They stare at you in surprise, backing away from your naked blade. Apparently the thief showed you into someone else's room! You put your sword away, apologize to the couple, and beat a hasty retreat. Having wasted time waiting, you should now start looking for Mencius. Turn to **198**.



391

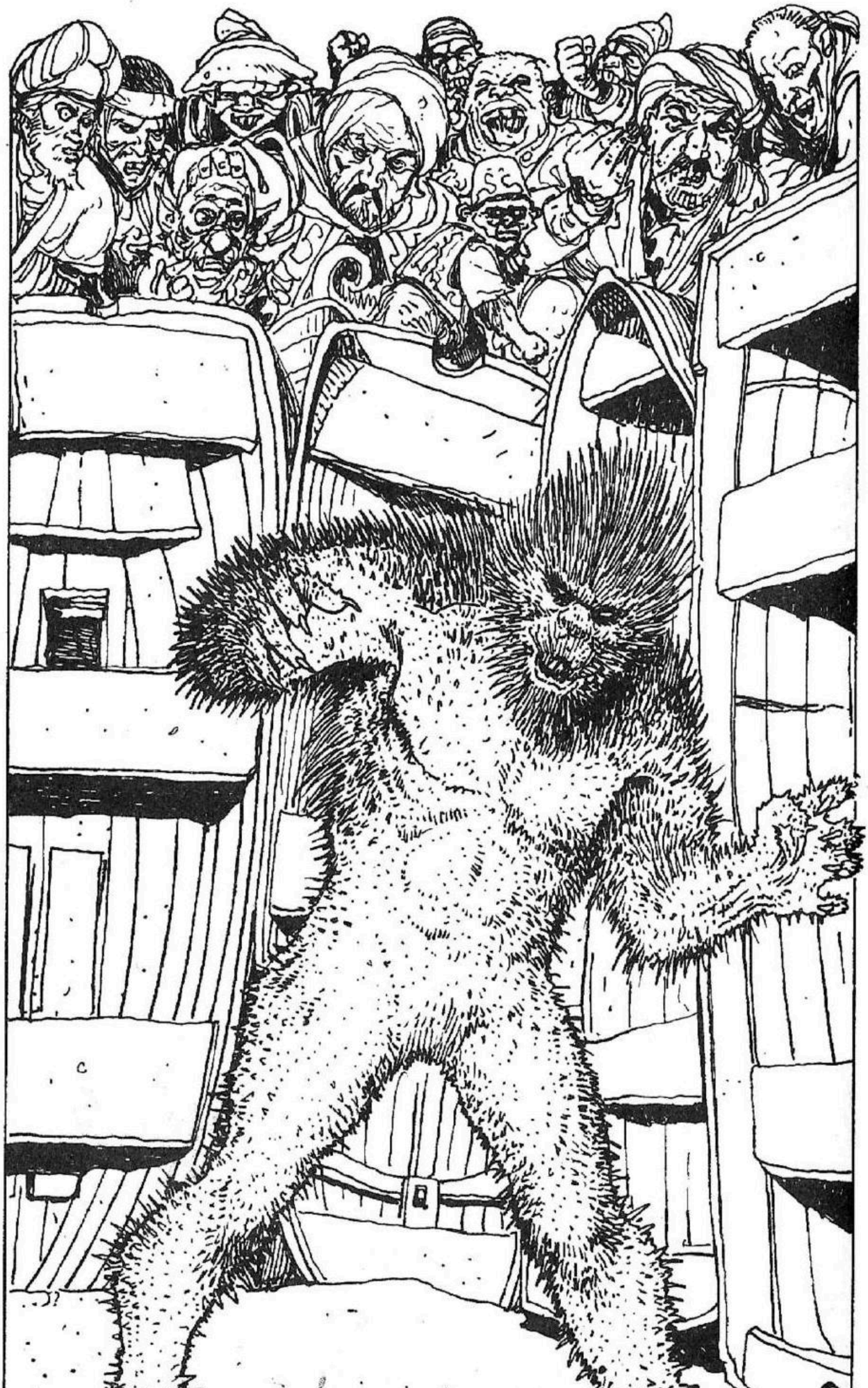
Unslinging the rope from your belt, you loop it round the sorcerer and pull it tight before he can think to resist. The book drops from his hand, and he mouths further strange sounds. You tighten the rope and he squeals in pain. It is unusual that he can be hurt so easily, but it may be a ruse. If you strangle him to death, turn to **299**. If you change your mind and free him instead, turn to **221**.

392

You hurry up the flight of stone steps to the chamber above. Here Mencius is waiting for you. Once again you are facing an enemy, pitting your wits and determination against his black arts. But this time his power is greater than that of any mage you have ever faced. As if to flaunt this, he is hovering a metre or so above the floor of the chamber, waiting for you to make the first move. What will you do? If you have the word 'narcolepsism' and wish to use it, turn to **70**. If you have a pistol and wish to shoot Mencius, turn to **185**. If you have a gold hex and wish to throw it, turn to **222**. If you have a ruby ring, you may use its secret unless you have the word 'genie' written down, in which case nothing happens. If you can perform none of these actions, turn to **91**.

393

Before long, night falls. You are still in the middle of nowhere, but you have slept rough before. If you have a Book of Craft, turn to **263**. If you do not, but you do have a shackles key, a Sneeka Scar or a Shauca Scar, turn to **178**. Otherwise, check your *Adventure Sheet*. If the box marked 'Switch' in the Companion section is ticked, turn to **84**. If it is not ticked, turn to **216**.



394

The building is an informal arena. Spectators sit on raised wooden stands and watch the progress of a fight, conducted in the circular area and fenced in with what look like small boats. You can't see the fight from where you are, so you climb up the stands. There's a scream from the arena, followed by a cheer, as the current match ends. The contestants leave the arena before you can get a clear view. You do spot Saleem, however, and are surprised to see that his monkey is wearing clothes. Greeting him politely, you say the name of Harun al-Harun. He lets out a bellow of rage and fastens two huge, hairy hands round your neck. Before you can resist, he has flung you down into the arena. 'Here's your next competitor!' roars the monkey-loving Saleem.

Your attempts to climb up the boats and escape are foiled by the spectators at the top, who are now eagerly betting on the match. Then one of the boats slides to one side and out strides a creature composed entirely of spikes, with wicked black eyes buried in a foul-featured face.

SPIKE FIEND	SKILL 10	STAMINA 7

If you win, turn to **165**.

395

It's hard work climbing up the mountain in the punishing heat of the sun, but eventually you make it. This hill is prominent and, despite the heat haze, you can see for kilometres. Your eye follows the silver ribbon of the river at whose bank you arrived. It is joined by several mountain streams and, some way off, it passes through a town. You can't make out any people at this distance, but there are definitely buildings of some kind. On the distant horizon a glimmer betokens the sea, or perhaps a mighty river or lake. As your eye follows it around, you realize that it must be the sea. You can make out a dark area there which may be a city. Turning around further, you look down at a range of low hills. Only a few kilometres distant, you can see a thin plume of smoke. Will you:

Climb back down to the river and follow it downstream?	Turn to **195**
Head for the coast, and the 'city'?	Turn to **27**
Make your way towards the plume of smoke?	Turn to **302**

396

'Yes!' Reinhardt pipes up. 'There's something you must do for me.' If the box marked 'Switch' on your *Adventure Sheet* is ticked, turn to **266**; otherwise, turn to **133**.

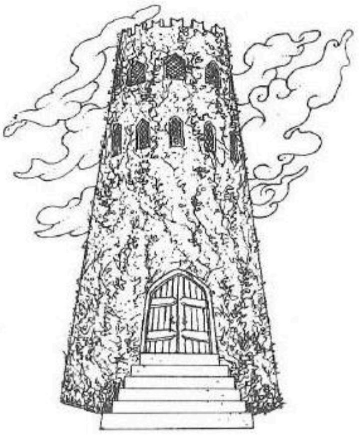
397

As the feast draws to an end and the guests leave, you prepare to retire, but Al-Haddar beckons you near. If you have a companion, you notice that he is snoring happily.

'Now is a good time for stories,' your host says quietly. You thought he had spent the whole evening telling stories, and you say so, but Al-Haddar chuckles. 'Those were the kind of story my beloved brother, Al-

Bakbuk the Prattler, likes – but my *real* stories are a different matter.' He ushers you into a comfortable drawing room, settles down on a pile of cushions, and starts his tale. 'Many years ago, in a certain city far away, there lived an upright man whose name was Jaddar. He had made a name for himself by catching criminals, especially those who dabbled in magic in order to cheat their victims. At the time of my story, Jaddar had spent a whole year chasing a villain by the name of Abdul Al-Azrad whom he had pursued from city to city, crossing mountains, seas and deserts. He finally caught up with Abdul Al-Azrad in a forest and, hurrying closer, prepared to shoot the fiend with his magic bow. But Abdul Al-Azrad was a wily wizard. Just as the magic arrow was loosed from Jaddar's bow, he transformed himself into an animal, avoiding the missile. Which do you think Al-Azrad turned himself into, a snake or a bird?'

If you say a snake, turn to **54**. If you say a bird, turn to **282**.



398

He picks up his book and starts again on his spell. You try to imitate the sounds and remember the gestures, and you drift into slumber, having successfully committed the spell to memory. Note down the word 'narcolepsism' on your *Adventure Sheet*. Turn to **341**.

399

The horsemen have little patience with you. Drawing cruelly curved swords, they wheel their horses and attack.

	SKILL	STAMINA
First HIGHWAYMAN	7	8
Second HIGHWAYMAN	6	7

If you are alone, fight them one at a time (if you win, turn to **80**). If you have a companion, he is forced to fight the second highwayman. If the box marked 'Switch' has never been ticked, just fight the first highwayman and, if you win, turn to **156**. Otherwise, carry out your fight against the first highwayman and your companion's fight against the second highwayman simultaneously (remember, if he has nothing to use as a weapon, your companion with his Attack Strength reduced by 2 points). If you defeat the first highwayman, you may engage the second; but if you do so, your companion will stop fighting. If your companion dies, the second highwayman will wait until your opponent also dies before attacking you. If both highwaymen are killed, turn to **249**.

400

All feeling disappears, first from your limbs, then from your body. Is this death? A memory is nagging at you, but you cannot place it . . . until light bursts upon your eyes – torchlight. You are in a cell. A crack sunders the floor. Reinhardt is standing at one side.

Somehow you have returned to the Margrave's castle. You and Reinhardt make your way through its passages while you explain how you killed Mencius, until you come to the Great Hall. Here, it looks as if a battle is about to be waged. The chamberlain, backed by a contingent of the castle guards, is shouting at the captain, who has a squad of soldiers, weapons at the ready. As you and Reinhardt walk the length of the hall, however, they fall silent. Reinhardt seats himself on the great chair, and one by one the guards and soldiers kneel. Finally only the chamberlain and the captain are left. Then they too kneel.

'I, Reinhardt, Margrave of this land, have returned. There will be no more bickering among my retainers. From now on, you will devote your energies to the proper upkeep of this realm . . . and to the assistance of the Magehunter, to whom I pledge my full and undying support.'

Reinhardt has indeed learnt from his experience. From this day forward, he will be true to his word. Not only does he throw his full weight behind your pursuit of evil, but he rewards you with great wealth and privilege. Now and again you wonder about Khasim, Al-Bakbuk and his brother, and the fantastical land of Kallamehr. As Reinhardt matures into a stern but fair lord, from time to time he reminisces with you in the language that you two, uniquely, share. He even offers you a permanent position as his chief retainer. You, of course, respectfully decline: you have better things to do. Let all mages and servants of evil quake in their boots – *the Magehunter is on your trail!*

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Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone

The world of Titan is an extremely dangerous place. Mankind and its allies huddle in fortified settlements, for beyond the castle walls the wild lands stretch across three continents. Out in the wastelands, Orc tribes war with each other for dominance. Savage monsters roam at will in search of food. Evil sorcerers ready their inhuman armies for battle. No one, surely, would venture out into such inhospitable places – unles the rewards were so great a hero couldn't possibly refuse!

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The request, brought by carrier pigeon, is clear. An experienced adventurer is desperately needed in the distant city of Arion for a mission of deadly importance – an adventurer like YOU. When you arrive at the court of King Jonthane, the urgency of the mission becomes clear. Telessa, the beautiful Princess Royal, is missing, believed kidnapped. She must be rescued, and she must be rescued fast.

Unfortunately, in his haste, King Jonthane has already given the quest to another, your deadly rival Fang-zen of Jitar! You know that the only person suitable for this heroic task is you. Can you prove that you are the one to rescue the princess – and more importantly find her, wherever she may be held, before she can be harmed? Hurry, for time is running out!

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Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone

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To ensure his plans succeed, the evil sorcerer has enlisted the services of the Knights of Doom. One heroic knight – YOU! – must creep through a land plunged into war, penetrate the enemy lines and overcome the deadliest foe of them all!

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Marc Gascoigne

It started with a burglary. Borne aloft on the back of an immense bat, a sinister thief breaks into the tower of the sorcerer Yaztromo. Guided by long-dead voices, he manages to make off with an ancient scroll whose secrets could spell doom and destruction for all Allansia!

Chadda Darkmane is soon on the trail of the thief. But as the quest grows ever longer, his nagging doubts about the power of sorcery turn into nightmares. The trail leads far beyond northern Allansia, to the Pirate Coast and the twisting alleyways of Rimon, where Darkmane's nightmares become flesh! For the thief has used the ancient scroll to summon others to help him in his sorcerous task, Demons who are not bound by the constraints of earthly forms – who feast on the human spirit.

A few brave companions accompany Darkmane, but will they be enough – and in time – to stop the thief from unlocking the final secret of Yaztromo's scroll? *Demonstealer*, the second Fighting Fantasy novel in a series that began with *The Trolltooth Wars*, holds all the answers.

SHADOWMASTER

Ian Livingstone

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The sorcerer Yaztromo, for so long the self-appointed guardian of the lands around Darkwood Forest, cannot stand idly by while his countrymen are put to the sword. With Chadda Darkmane close at hand, Yaztromo embarks on a quest to discover the source of the raids and the sinister reason behind them.

What they discover is that when Chaos rules, nothing can ever be as it seems. Fair hides foul, insanity hides inner order, and darkness lurks deep within the light. Can Yaztromo and Darkmane defeat these illusions to discover the real master of the shadows? Only *Shadowmaster*, the third Fighting Fantasy novel, can tell you!